PLR SAMPLE LIBRARY AUTHORITIES
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does the PLR office do?

The PLR office makes payments to authors from government funds for the use of their books in public libraries. Payments are made based on the estimated number of times a book is borrowed nationally. Estimates are produced from data collected from a sample of library authorities throughout the UK. In order to ensure that the sample is as fair and representative as possible, a third of the library authorities are changed each year.

Does our library authority have to participate in the sample?

If designated, your authority must provide the requested data – but we will only designate authorities with a suitable catalogue and library management system (LMS). If you are changing your LMS supplier around the time that test data is due, or when live data collection is about to start, we may decide to select another authority and postpone your involvement until another year.

What is the rough timetable of events?

Pre-Designation Year:

Questionnaires are sent to possible library authorities	April/May
Shortlist of possible authorities drawn up	May/June
Visits/telephone visits to possible authorities	July/August
Final list of authorities chosen	September/October
Official designation notices sent to authorities	December

Designation Year:

Test data required from library authorities	February/March
Reimbursement costs agreed	May
Purchase orders sent to library authorities	June
Invoices received from library authorities	July
Live data collection commences (monthly)	1 July
Switch to bi-monthly data collection after 6 months	January

How long will we be in the PLR sample?

You can only participate for a maximum of 4 years continuously – although the normal participation period is now 3 years. We may decide to deselect your authority early if you change your LMS during the 3 years – but you will always receive at least 6 month's notice of designation or deselection.

Can we reclaim the cost of providing data to PLR?

Yes. We will consult with your LMS supplier about their annual PLR software maintenance charges. The LMS supplier will invoice you and you will then reclaim the money from PLR. At the same time, we will reimburse you for any "operational costs" that you incur (for example you might want to make a modest charge for each set of data you send us to cover staff time). Some authorities decide not to charge for operational costs as the effort involved is minimal.

How frequently should we invoice you?

You should invoice us once per year. We will send you a purchase order each year as a reminder to invoice us.

How frequently do we have to send data?

Live data collection should start on 1 July. You should send data for 1 July – 31 July at the beginning of August and then continue monthly for 6 months until the end of December. From the January, we will ask you to switch to sending data every two months for the remainder of the time that you are in the sample.

Will we get any regular feedback on our data?

Yes. When you send in your initial test data, you will receive an email with various analysis reports attached. You will get a list of your "Top 25 Most Borrowed Books" every time you send us some data. In addition, you will receive national, regional and local "Top 100 Most Borrowed Books" lists every year. If we find any anomalies in the data (eg invalid ISBNs) we will report these to you so that you can amend them if you wish.

How can I find out more about PLR?

You can visit the PLR website at: www.bl.uk/plr.

You are welcome to visit the PLR office in Stockton on Tees by arrangement. PLR staff are always available to answer your questions by telephone or email.

1.10.13