

# WebApps Group Project: Law Case Study

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## 1.

The MSR-SSLA is not a free software licence due to the following reasons:

- Freedom 0 states that a program may be run for any purpose, however the MSR-SSLA states that the software may only be used, copied, reproduced or distributed for non-commercial purposes.
- Freedom 1 states the freedom to study and change the program as you wish, while the MSR-SSLA only allows the reverse engineering or decompilation of binary format files to the extent allowed by law (e.g. to create software to work with the binary format program).
- Freedom 2 is broken due to the same clause as freedom 0, since the ability to only redistribute the software for non-commercial purposes does not constitute complete freedom to redistribute copies to help your neighbour as required by the FSF.
- Freedom 3 is similarly broken since the MSR-SSLA states that any derivative works may only be distributed for non-commercial uses, rather than a complete freedom of redistribution and access to the source code of a program is not necessarily granted as reverse engineering and decompilation is only allowed to the extent granted by law.

## 2.

- a. Andy has not violated MacFanboy's copyright. This is because, despite the clause in the licence, Andy has the right to use monitoring tools in order to discover the workings and interactions of a piece of software and this right overrides licence clauses.
- b. Beatrice does not break MacFanboy's copyright by decompiling the library since, despite the clause in the licence, she had the right to decompile the program for the purpose of achieving interoperability with independently created software.

She does not break Andy's copyright by studying or altering his code since these acts are allowed under copyright law and the GPLv3.

She does however break Andy's copyright by uploading the compiled altered app to an app site and selling the copies. This is because she is (presumably) not also distributing the source code and thus is not distributing the derivative work fully under the GPL and as such is breaking the licence with Andy.

- c. An alternative course of action for Beatrice would be to also publish her modified source code online such as to comply with that part of the GPLv3. This would still allow her to sell the compiled program on the app store, though it would be possible for anyone to find the source code online and compile it themselves.

Another alternative would be to, assuming the facility in the app store to do so, also send a copy of the modified source code to anyone that buys the app. This would allow her to comply with the relevant areas of the GPLv3 without people being able to circumvent paying for the app since the GPL only requires that people given object code versions of the software to have the source code made available to them.