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We are small educational software developers who are writing to express our opposition to the BBC's Digital Curriculum service.

Britain is currently the world leader in producing educational software resources and we believe that the BBC will be producing a service that is broadly similar to products and services that are already on the market. As such, we fail to see how duplicating existing resources represents value for money for licence fee payers.

Further, by financing the service with public money it appears that the BBC is breaking European competition law which prohibits the use of public money to compete against existing commercial companies.

There is evidence to suggest that the repercussions for the commercial producers could be severe. For instance, two independent reports have found that if the BBC's Digital Curriculum is approved then 3400 million worth of orders could be lost to the commercial producers.

Further, the SRU report commissioned by the Digital Learning Alliance (DLA) found that in order to balance the damage caused by the BBC's proposed plans the Government would have to provide 3800 million of ring fenced funding. As such the proposed electronic Learning Credit for England would be inadequate.

The effect of the BBC's Digital Curriculum could be that there would be fewer companies producing fewer educational products and services, thus resulting in a restricted choice in the market place.

We are also concerned by the BBC's growing policy of promoting many of its peripheral operations between prime time BBC television and radio programs, an option that is not available to any commercial company.

In conclusion we believe that the BBC's intent is to create a monopoly and we fear that it would consequently abuse its dominant position to the detriment of commercial producers, licence fee payers and most importantly, the users of Educational Software Resources.

Yours sincerely,

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