



Openly Licensing and Sharing your Resources

Applying an open licence turns an educational resource into an Open Educational Resource (OER). This Guidance document discusses OER school policies and processes, explains how to apply an open licence to your educational resources and looks at how you can share the resulting OER.

Preparing to openly license your learning resource

There are two checks that you need to make before you add an open licence to a resource:

1. If you've produced the resource in the course of your employment, you will need to have permission from your employer to share it in this way.
2. If you have included materials in your resource that have been created by anyone else, you need to make sure that you have permission to include these materials. For instance, content under a Creative Commons licence can be used (subject to the licence terms, e.g. attribution).

You should never incorporate resources or learning materials that other people have produced in your own teaching materials, unless you have permission to do so.

Once you have made sure you have permission to share your resource, and any materials created by other people included in your resource, you can apply a licence.

Educational resources - rights and permissions

By default, employers (in all sectors) are the legal and beneficial owner of the copyright of materials produced by an employee in the line of their employment. Your employer retains copyright ownership of works you have produced, unless a specific agreement has been made. Work produced outside of your employment, for example the copyright of any work you do to further your own professional development (e.g. keeping a blog, creating a presentation), that is not organised or paid for by your employer, and completed in your own time, belongs to you.



The employer of staff working at community schools (often called maintained schools) and voluntary controlled schools will be the Local Education Authority (LEA). The LEA owns the school buildings and land, and employs school staff; with the governing body taking responsibility for running the school. In Leicester, the LEA is Leicester City Council. For other types of school, including voluntary aided schools, foundation schools (sometimes called trusts) and academies, the governing body will usually be the employer.

Legally speaking, unless an agreement is already in place, staff should obtain permission from their employer to apply any additional permissions to their work (including an open licence), or to share work on web-based resource sites (for example, the TES Teaching Resources site). Staff don't have an automatic right to take copies of their work from one employer to another. Putting agreements in place to openly license work makes sharing and accessing resources simpler for everyone.

OER school policies and processes

Currently, few LEAs and school governing bodies have policies and processes in place that provide permission for staff to share their educational resources. Typically, specific requests relating to the rights of work produced by school employees are negotiated on an individual basis. Some schools do have policies and practices in place for work that is shared online, but these are more likely to focus on accessibility and quality assurance, rather than copyright.

Putting agreements and processes in place at school level (where the governing body is the employer), or at a local authority level (where the LEA is the employer), is an important way of supporting staff and school communities in creating and sharing OER. **Leicester City Council has provided permission for all community and voluntary aided schools in the city to openly license the educational resources that staff create.** Teachers across UK primary and secondary schools have always fostered a culture of sharing resources and good practice. OER and Creative Commons licensing are good ways of supporting this, and introducing them to your school can help promote discussion around ownership, attribution and the use of digital resources.

Both the European Commission and UK Government guidelines on the use and reuse of public sector

information recommend that licences which place as few restrictions on reuse as possible (while providing acknowledgement) should be used to share publicly funded resources. In line with these guidelines, we are using and recommending the **Creative Commons Attribution** licence. Applying a Creative Commons Attribution licence means that your resources can be reused freely by others. Openly licensing learning resources can support schools in promoting the great work that staff and schools are producing.

Permission to share educational resources through open licences represents an exciting opportunity for schools to take a fresh look at the original materials staff are producing, and how these can best be used to promote the school and build connections with other educators and organisations.



Governing bodies should consider what steps can be taken to encourage staff to openly license materials which represent the quality of learning and teaching that takes place at the school.

OER policies should make it clear that the employer (the LEA or governing body) encourages staff to openly license materials. Policies should also state that the open licence selected should place as few restrictions on use and reuse of the materials as possible, and should require acknowledgment of the source, for example, the Creative Commons Attribution licence. A short, clear policy should state what permission is being given to staff, outline the terms of the permission and provide contact details for, and queries relating to, the permission.

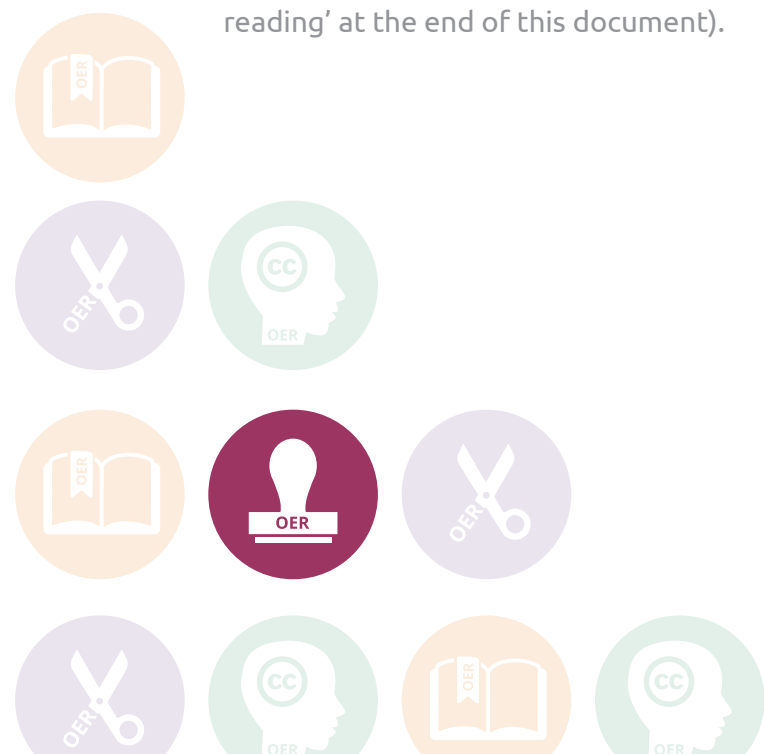
Governing bodies should review the approaches schools will already have in place relating to sharing work online. Processes to support permission to openly license materials should seek to build on existing checks and support for professional standards; for example, advice and training relating to the creation of accessible resources. Governing bodies should not seek to introduce procedures that are unnecessarily onerous and unwieldy, and that would discourage the sharing of educational resources under open licence.

Materials shared externally under open licence should be of the same standard and quality as materials used internally:

- The resource should not include the work of others, unless there is permission to do so, or where the work is in the public domain;
- Any additional work used should be properly credited;
- The work should be accurate and neat.

Basic checks and steps should be taken to promote accessibility. The work should be shared in a file format that enables others to adapt it (e.g. in Word or OpenOffice format, rather than just as a PDF file). If your school has an OER policy, the licence should be completed accordingly, and be clearly displayed, as appropriate.

Leicester City Council has also produced model documents to encourage and support schools and other local authorities to implement open licensing policies and practice (see 'further reading' at the end of this document).



Applying a Creative Commons licence

The actual process of applying a licence is straightforward. Any content that you produce yourself, such as text, images, diagrams, audio and movies, can be licensed openly (we recommend Creative Commons Attribution). If you have created the resource using content created by, or building on, the work of colleagues, check that they are happy with how you are attributing them. If you are incorporating the work of your students, you should be aware that they have ownership over resources that they create, and you should check that they are happy for you to use them.

If the resource you made contains content by others:

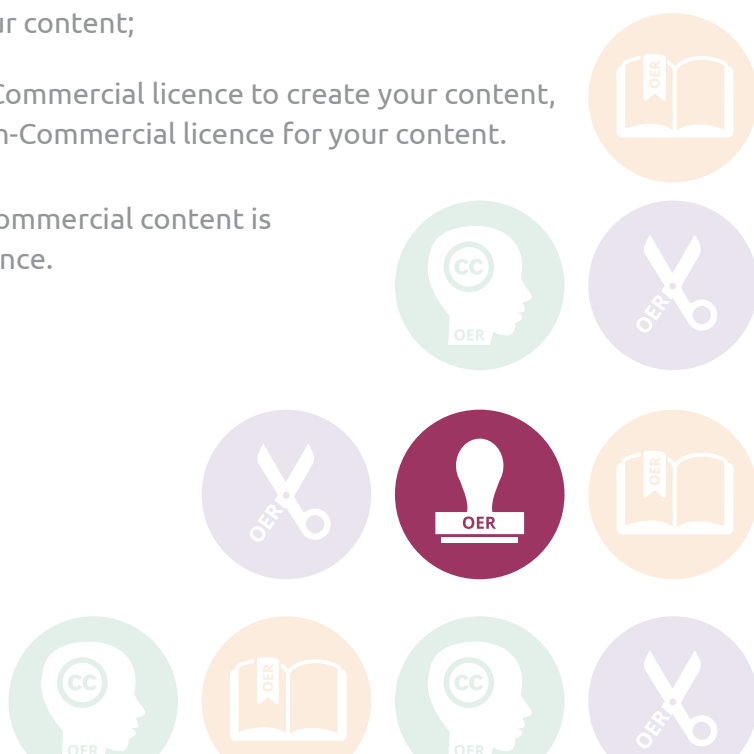
- make sure that you are not using any content for which you have no permission (or content with unknown permission);
- check that you have only used openly licensed content (i.e. most likely Creative Commons content) and/or content that is in the public domain;
- make sure that you have appropriately attributed all content that you have used.

Despite being able to use content under the conditions of the school CLA licence in your teaching, such content cannot be included in documents you intend to license openly. Similarly, content that you are using in class under fair dealing cannot be used in an OER.

Once you have made the above checks regarding content produced by others, you can then decide what licence to use:

- If you have not included any content with a Share-Alike licence (or, more precisely, if your work is not an adaptation of a Share-Alike work), then you choose the Creative Commons Attribution licence for your content;
- If you have not included any content under a Non-Commercial licence in creating your work, you choose the Creative Commons Attribution licence for your content;
- If you have adapted content under a Share-Alike licence to create your work, you'll need to use the same Share-Alike licence for your content;
- If you have adapted content under a Non-Commercial licence to create your content, you'll need to use the same or another Non-Commercial licence for your content.

Further information on using Share-Alike and Non-Commercial content is available in the documents accompanying this Guidance.



Example licence

To license a document that you have produced under a **Creative Commons Attribution licence**, the simplest way is to paste a suitable statement at the end of your document. This statement contains the attribution (to you and your school), followed by the Creative Commons licence itself:



[RESOURCE TITLE], by [TEACHER NAME/URL] at [SCHOOL NAME/URL]. This work is licensed under the **Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence**.

For example, at a school maintained by Leicester City Council, you might attribute as follows:



Life-cycle of a butterfly, by Teresa Smith (**Red Admiral School, Leicester City Council**). This work is licensed under the **Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence**.

Either before or after your own licence statement, you should also place the attribution for any resources that you have used. The 'acknowledgements' section at the end of this document provides an example of how you can attribute any resources that you have included or adapted.

Attaching a licence to different types of educational resources

Depending on the type of the work, there are a range of ways you can include the licence details. For instance, if you were licensing a presentation, your licence could be included on a final slide. If you were licensing a film, you would include the licence in your end credits. There may be certain works (such as images or audio files) where it's not possible to attach the licence itself in a visual way. For images, the licence could be attached along the side of the image (depending on the size), or in the information provided about the image, or on the web page displaying the image. For an audio file, the licence can be spoken. You can also include the licence in brief in the filename itself, e.g.:

CC_Kiwi_by_Creative_Commons_Aotearoa_New_Zealand_**CC-BY**.jpg

Digital resources (including images, video and audio) also allow you to mark documents with attribution details. You may be familiar with the fact that music files often contain additional information (called 'metadata'), such as the name of the artist, the name of the album and the year of the music release. Similarly, photographs often contain the date when the picture was taken, or even the location. Such metadata can also be used to include information about the Creative Commons licence. Typically, this is done using the metadata function within the software used to create the resource, and you should be able to find this in the software manual by searching for 'metadata'. Further tips are available alongside these Guidance documents.

What should I share?

Think about sharing your work in ways that make it as easy as possible for other educators to use and reuse your content. Non-editable formats (for example, PDF) make it difficult for others to obtain extracts in order to build on your work. You should always provide work in an editable format; for example, an OpenOffice or Microsoft Office application. The more people who have access to, and can open and work with, your resources, the better.

Think about making your shared resources as useful as possible to other educators. As well as sharing individual or sets of images, you can contextualise these by sharing your lesson plan, or providing information about why the images were created, or how you made use of them. If you share a presentation, you could provide information about the content of the slides in the notes section.

To get started, look at which materials you have already created (e.g. a single image or a scheme of work) that could be shared under an open licence. Skills and knowledge will develop as staff become more confident about openly sharing, and schools develop a culture of openly licensing resources.

Letting others know about your OER

Once you have licensed your resources, they are now an OER. It's important to let others know, and there are many ways to do that:

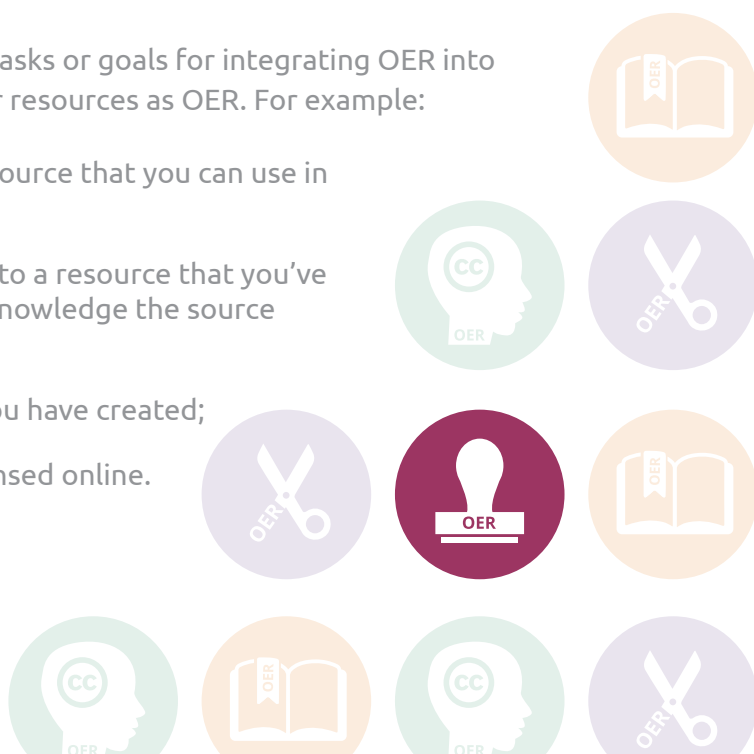
- You can share resources with others directly, via email, memory sticks and shared folders;
- You can put resources on to your school website or blog (and your own website or blog);
- You can upload your resource to your school Virtual Learning Environment (if the site you share your resource on is only accessible by password, you should also look at ways of sharing openly);
- You can share your resource on specific OER sites, including the ORBIT site (<http://oer.educ.cam.ac.uk>).

Next steps: putting OER into practice

Set yourself, your department or your school some tasks or goals for integrating OER into your practice, and creating and sharing some of your resources as OER. For example:

- search for, and find, an openly licensed resource that you can use in your practice;
- incorporate an openly licensed resource into a resource that you've created yourself, making sure that you acknowledge the source appropriately;
- apply an open licence to a resource that you have created;
- share a resource that you have openly licensed online.

Further ideas for activities are available alongside these Guidance documents.



Further reading

This document is part of a 4-part series, available at <http://schools.leicester.gov.uk/openeducation> for download, and in editable versions, alongside supplementary information sheets, workshop and classroom ideas, as well as step-by-step walk-throughs.

- The Leicester City Council model documents for implementing open licensing in schools are also available on the same web page.

Acknowledgements

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