

# Open Textbook Toolkit



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This book was produced using Pressbooks.com, and PDF rendering was done by PrinceXML.

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This toolkit is a living document designed to support university and college faculty who would like to create their first open textbook. Key sections in this toolkit are organized in an FAQ format and include information related to stakeholders, technology, copyright, accessibility, and more general production and classroom-use workflows of an open textbook. This content is designed to be general and intended to be adapted to the context of each institution. Editing for local context could include the inclusion of references to specific institutional resources, especially in the stakeholder and technology sections.

This toolkit is in an FAQ format and is organized into six key sections along with a page with resources and references:

1. Starting
2. Technology
3. Accessibility
4. Copyright
5. Class Use
6. Future Use
7. Resources

This project was funded by the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development and administered by eCampusOntario. This project has been authored in

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Stephanie Orfano, and William Heikooop

collaboration with Brock University and the University of  
Windsor and is hosted by the University of Toronto.

## Feedback

We're happy to hear your feedback! Let us know if there's  
something you'd like to see, if you'd like to use this  
material, and how we can support you.

Are you using this resource? Let us know how!

Please email [online.learning@utoronto.ca](mailto:online.learning@utoronto.ca).



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# 1.

## Starting

What is an open textbook?

An open textbook is a textbook licensed under an open copyright license and made available online to be freely used by students, teachers, and members of the public. They are available for free as online versions, and as low-cost printed versions, should students or faculty opt for these. Open textbooks are a way to significantly reduce student textbook costs while giving instructors the flexibility to reformat and customize their course material. They are an affordable, flexible alternative to traditionally-published textbooks.

What does it mean for a book to be 'open'?

Open Educational Resources (OERs) was coined at UNESCO's 2002 Forum on Open Courseware. Guidelines on implementing global activities were fleshed out in the Paris OER Declaration in 2012. OERs are defined as "teaching, learning and research materials in any medium, digital or otherwise, that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions. Open licensing is built within the existing framework of intellectual property

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rights as defined by relevant international conventions and respects the authorship of the work” (UNESCO 2012).

What are the 5R’s of Openness?

Open advocate, David Wiley, has developed a framework for thinking about the bundle of permissions that define OERs, outlining the permitted activities that are essential to work being open:

1. **Retain:** the right to make, own, and control copies of the content
2. **Reuse:** the right to use the content in a wide range of ways (e.g., in a class, in a study group, on a website, in a video)
3. **Revise:** the right to adapt, adjust, modify, or alter the content itself (e.g., translate the content into another language)
4. **Remix:** the right to combine the original or revised content with other open content to create something new (e.g., incorporate the content into a mashup)
5. **Redistribute:** the right to share copies of the original content, your revisions, or your remixes with others (e.g., give a copy of the content to a friend)

How can I make sure I’m not creating a book that already exists?

Before starting to create from scratch, search an open book collections to find out if an open textbook has already

been created in your area which you are able to adopt and revise to meet your needs. BCCampus 101: Where to Find Open Textbooks guide is an excellent resource which lists a number of existing repositories which contain open textbooks. Additional list of resources is available in the Resources chapter of this toolkit

## Do I need to create a new book from scratch?

You can choose to adopt a version of your existing work, license permitting, or create an entirely new material. Be sure to find out what other open content is already available as you can adopt, revise and remix based on the type of license that this content might have (for further details please refer to the section on key copyright considerations).

## What does an open textbook project look like?

A typical project normally involves content authoring and content publishing elements and can be further broken down into five phases:

1. **Priming:** environmental scan to determine nature of the project/consultations
2. **Pre-production:** project planning and documentation
3. **Design:** development of outline
4. **Development:** writing and editing, finalizing draft
5. **Publishing:** making content available, incorporating into curriculum, sharing with colleagues and maybe printing your own hard

copies

What resources are usually needed to create a book?

- **Technology:** access to authoring tools and publishing platform
- **Collaborators:** co-authors/co-editors depending on the project, experts who could provide advice in areas of copyright, instructional design, technology options etc.
- **Time commitment:** writing a brand new textbook, reworking an existing manuscript or adapting another open textbook will require varying time commitment. On average it can take anywhere from 9 months to 18 months to produce an open textbook

I am submitting a grant application to create an open textbook, what expenses should I consider including in my application?

For open textbooks faculty can use their award towards copyediting, find a volunteer copyeditor, or do light copyediting and formatting in house depending on how much discretionary funding is available. For professional graphic design, such as book covers, charts etc, a designer can be hired to produce something unique.

## Is it possible to create an open textbook without funding?

The answer to this question will depend on the types of skills and access to existing resources which an author might have. Major costs are usually affiliated with editing assistance, graphic design etc., however, if an author already has access to these tools, it is possible to create an open textbook on a budget without additional grants.

## What type of grants can I use towards creating OER?

There are provincial grants available to support the production of open textbooks, eCampusOntario offers open textbook funding which authors, in collaboration with other units across their institutions and/or in partnership with other institutions, can apply for. Non-OER grants can be used towards the creation of open textbooks which may be offered through institutional programs such as Learning and Teaching Enhancement Funds, Instructional Technology Innovation funds or Teaching and Learning grants, along with bursaries and incentives offered through individual disciplines.

## Who is typically involved in the process of developing an open textbook?

Authors can work on their manuscripts independently in Microsoft Word or in collaboration with other authors on platforms like Google Drive or Grackle. Your collaborators will vary depending on your institutional capacity but here are some of the roles which can be explicitly affiliated with this process:

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- Instructional designer
- Librarian
- Digital creator/illustrator
- Editor/research assistant

Once the manuscript is ready, meaning it's written, visuals are included and content has been organized in the desired format, it can be imported into PressBooks. Authors can book consultations throughout the creation process with Online Learning offices, copyright and technology specialists at the library or into external organizations such as the Rebus Community to find collaborators.

What is a reasonable timeframe to complete an open manuscript?

It can generally take around 9 – 18 months, depending on the types of resources which are available, your own time and your writing style. Some authors take more time to write while others might already have a manuscript they are ready to tweak or redesign; some authors might need more time to produce effective graphics and make sure they are fully available and others, whose works are less visually-based, won't face similar challenges.

How can I ensure that my book is recognized for quality?

There are a number of ways in which an open textbook can be evaluated for quality, however, its value will ultimately be demonstrated by its impact on student learning in your classroom:

- subject matter peer review
- reviewing open content for plagiarism
- beta testing in classrooms may result in ongoing editing
- anonymous student review at the end of each term
- testing for accessibility and compatibility with assistive technologies

How can I visualize what this resource will look like?

Working with instructional designer, reviewing existing open textbooks for ideas and creating a draft of your work in Google Docs or Microsoft Word will help you to reflect on how this resource will look. This might be done as a sample chapter.





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## 2.

### Technology

There are a number of software tools that can be used to create an open textbook. Your choice will depend on the functionality you are seeking as well as your interest in reusing existing open textbooks or making yours available for reuse, or both. Below are some of the tools that assist with creation/adaption process, formatting, and wider distribution.

What authoring tools can I use to start writing?

Authoring tools can be used for initial drafting of content before the formatting/publishing stage. An authoring tool may also be part of a publishing or distribution platform (see the sections below).

If you are used to writing and editing textbooks on your personal computer and do not need collaborative functionality, Microsoft Word may be a readily available and simple solution. It allows tracking changes and leaving comments, and the file can be saved as a PDF for sharing externally. Additionally, MS Office provides Accessibility Checker to identify and fix issues with your document. Read more in the Accessibility section.

Google Docs is a free online version of a textbook editor. It

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supports collaborative simultaneous editing, commenting, and sharing. You can upload files to Google Docs and export them as PDF and EPUB. Additionally, you can use the Grackle plugin to help evaluate and fix accessibility issues in your Google Doc. Read more in the Accessibility section.

Both Word and Google Docs can be used for individual or collaborative authoring before moving the ready textbook to a publishing or distribution platform (see the sections below).

What publishing tools can I use to create an open textbook?

Publishing tools usually provide additional functionality for reviewing, formatting, presentation, and generating different output formats.

## WordPress PressBooks

PressBooks is both a web-based authoring tool and a publishing platform, and has been adopted by many Canadian institutions.

It allows importing a number of different formats, including Word, ePub and HTML. It can output your content as a website with an interactive menu and also generate on the fly output in PDF (for printing), ePub (for e-readers) and other formats that make it easier for others to reuse and adapt your content. It comes with easy to use layout templates and supports collaborative editing by authors/editors/project managers, etc.

- *What will it look like?* Here is an example of a book created with PressBooks
- *Where can I get it?* Download for free to host locally or use the web hosted version (fees apply for ad-free publishing)
- *How do I use it?* See PressBooks tutorials created by BCCampus

## Open Monograph Press (OMP)

OMP is a free, open source platform for managing a book publishing process. It can also act as a distribution platform.

OMP's robust editorial workflow allows managing and tracking materials from submission through internal and external review, editing, production, and publication. It is currently geared more towards scholarly monographs and would thus make a good choice for combination with the Open Typesetting Stack (currently in beta) may allow outputting books in HTML, PDF, and ePub formats.

- *What will it look like?* Here is an example of a book published with OMP 1.2 (LaTeX typesetting)
- *Where can I get it?* Download for free to host locally or use a hosted solution via your institution or Scholars Portal (for OCUL members) or PKP (fees apply)
- *How do I use it?* See the OMP user guide developed by PKP or test drive the platform on the PKP demo site.

## Scalar

Scalar is a free, open source publishing platform that enables authors to assemble media from multiple sources and juxtapose them with text, annotations, visualizations, etc. in a blog-like structure. The platform also supports collaborative authoring and reader commentary.

- *What will it look like?* Here is an example from Brock University
- *Where can I get it?* Download for free to host locally or register and use the online hosted solution
- *How do I use it?* See the Scalar 2 user guide

## GitBook

GitBook.com is the online platform to create and host books built using the GitBook format. It offers hosting, collaboration features and an easy-to-use desktop editor. Content can be imported in .docx or .html and output as a website or as an ebook (PDF, ePub or Mobi).

Authors familiar with GitHub and Markdown will likely feel most comfortable with GitBooks. It offers themes for different layouts, CSS design customization, media embedding, and is generally very extensible. While its features make it suitable for general textbook writing, it has traditionally been used more for manuals, documentation, FAQs, and IT-related resources.

- *What will it look like?* Here is an example of a

textbook on GitBook

- *Where can I get it?* Online hosting is free for open books; charges apply for private books or for organizational projects
- *How do I use it?* Find documentation at [toolchain.gitbook.com](http://toolchain.gitbook.com)

## OER Commons

OER Commons focuses on OER resources broadly and acts as both a repository and an authoring/adaptation tool.

It allows creating an open textbook from scratch, importing text from Google Docs, or adapting an existing OER resource from the OER Commons collection, provided the license allows remixing. It supports collaborative authoring and provides lesson and module builder templates.

All resources created with OER Commons are published on the OER Commons platform and added to the collection.

- *What will it look like?* Here is an example of an OER commons textbook
- *Where can I get it?* Create a free account on [oercommons.org](http://oercommons.org)
- *How do I use it?* See instructions on using OER Commons' Open Author tool

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## Summary of publishing tools

**Table 1.1. Summary of publishing tools**

Name	Strengths	Where to get it
WordPress Pressbooks	Easy to use collaborative authoring and publishing tool with import-export and formatting functionality	Download for free to host locally or use the web hosted version (fees apply for ad-free publishing)
Open Monographs Press	Has robust editorial workflow; works best for centrally managed text-based volumes	Download for free to host locally or use a hosted solution via your institution or Scholars Portal (for OCUL members) or PKP (fees apply)
Scalar	Accommodates media, visualizations, annotations, etc. in a blog-like format	Download for free to host locally or register and use the online hosted solution
GitBook	Flexible Markdown-based tool traditionally used for manuals, documentation, and IT-related resources	The online hosted solution is free for open books; charges apply for private books or for organizational projects
OER Commons	A repository and publishing tool; all adapted/created OERs become part of the repository	Create a free account on OER Commons website

## LaTeX for formatting and typesetting

LaTeX is a free open typesetting system. It has features designed for the production of technical and scientific documentation and is particularly useful for math based content and formulas.

While PressBooks has LaTeX capabilities, some STEM faculty may find that they are not robust enough to meet the needs of their content.

- *What will it look like?* Here is an example of a book typeset with LaTeX and respective LaTeX source code on GitHub
- *Where can I get it?* You can download LaTeX for free from their website
- *How do I use it?* See the TeX user group's brief getting started guide and further resources



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### 3.

## Accessibility

Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA, 2005) it is your responsibility, as a publisher of educational content to ensure that your book meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 accessibility criteria.

What material needs to be made accessible?

Educational content which contain things like quizzes, audio, video or images need to adhere to universal design principles and consider users of all abilities and how they access materials.

What kind of accessibility statement needs to accompany an open textbook?

You may consider including an accessibility statement on how to request another format on the landing page to your book.

How can I make sure that my editor follows accessibility guidelines?

It is a good practice to discuss editorial changes with

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accessibility in mind, sharing existing guidelines and original project documentation and goals with your editor. New images added will need to have alt text, new sections will need to have a proper heading structure etc. It's important to maintain the quality of your open textbook as it's being revised.

**Who is responsible for making reused open textbooks accessible?**

Institutions that choose to reuse materials created elsewhere and put them in their own course websites take on the responsibility of making this content accessible to their own users.

**What kind of toolkits are there to guide me through this process?**

This BC Open Textbook Accessibility Toolkit is an excellent resources and provides tips on accessibility throughout the authoring process outlining best practices of how to incorporate multimedia materials, resource template considerations and test a sample chapter for keyboard accessibility, any instructional content and reading navigation order. It addresses principles of universal design and provide best practices related to:

- Organizing your content
- Tagging images
- Incorporating multimedia
- Making formulas accessible

- Ensuring font size and contrast ration meet accessibility criteria

At the end of this guide, a simple checklist document is available for a quick accessibility overview of a given open textbook.



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## 4.

# Copyright

What rights to copyright owners have?

Different countries have copyright laws, so the answer will vary depending on the origin of the work. In Canada, copyright holders retain the exclusive legal right to produce, reproduce, publish or perform an original literary, artistic, dramatic or musical work.<sup>1</sup> This protection is automatic and applies to your work the moment it is created. The duration of copyright is dependant on the duration of the author's life. In Canada, the work is in copyright for the author's lifetime plus 50 years.

What does it mean to license your work?

It is within your exclusive rights as a copyright holder to authorize others to reproduce, adapt, rent, and perform (among other activities) your work. The authorization for others to use your work is referred to as a "license". The terms of the license will vary depending on the nature of the work and what the individual seeking the license (i.e. the licensee) wishes to do with it.<sup>2</sup>

## Are all instructors at liberty to make their intellectual property open?

The creator of the work is generally the copyright owner, however, this may not always be the case, an employer may hold copyright to works produced during the course of your employment.

It is important to verify if your employer has any policies surrounding intellectual property. In the case of many Canadian universities, copyright remains with the creator. Colleges tend to have different policies, with intellectual property rights being held by the employer. This may also be addressed in an employment contract. You may have transferred all or some of your exclusive rights to a publisher.

If you have previously published work that you would like to reuse in an OER, make sure to check your author/copyright transfer agreement. Some publishers require authors to transfer some or all of their copyrights upon publication of a work, potentially impacting its future in other resources. This is difficult with previously published journal articles, but resources are available for books. The Author's Alliance offers an excellent resource on Understanding Rights Reversion: When, Why, & How to Regain Copyright and Make Your Book More Available

## Where can I find a license to apply to my work?

Creative Commons licenses provide an easy way to manage the copyright terms that attach automatically to all creative material under copyright. With a core set of six copyright licenses, the selection of one will allow your

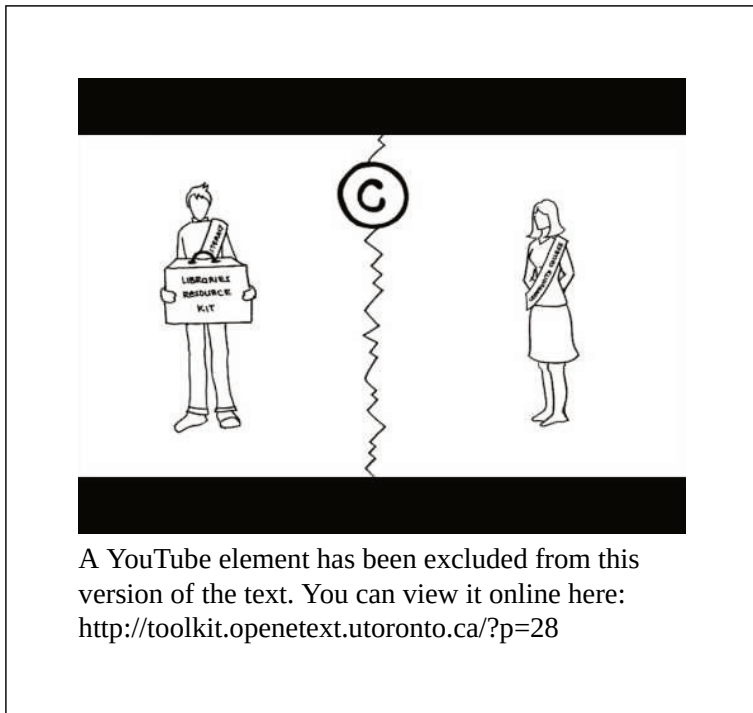
material to be shared and reused under terms that are flexible and legally sound.<sup>3</sup>

You can learn more about the layers of the Creative Commons licenses here: [creativecommons.org/licenses](https://creativecommons.org/licenses).

There are also other alternatives to the Creative Commons Licenses available: <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/facultyoertoolkit/chapter/creative-commons-alternatives>.

If you have previously published work that you would like to reuse in an OER, make sure to check your author/copyright transfer agreement for details on reuse. Some publishers require authors to transfer some or all of their copyrights upon publication of a work, potentially impacting its future reuse in other resources.

View this helpful video on Creative Commons Licenses for Non-Profit Organizations:



## How do I decide which license to adopt?

OERs are meant to be flexible and allow for maximum dissemination. When choosing a license, consider the rights you want to grant future users?

- You can learn more about the spectrum of licenses offered by the Creative Commons in their Licenses and Examples guide.
- Some funding agencies require the use of a specific license when creating OERs. If you receive funding, be sure to check the funding policy requirements. For example, the eCampusOntario Open Licensing Policy





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Learn more about the CC BY Attribution 4.0 International License, which includes attribution details and the full legal code.

Does this mean that commercial publishers can use my work?

When a CC-BY license is applied to a work, **anyone** can do anything they want with it as long as attribution is provided to the creators. As the Rebus Community explains, this is entirely possible in theory, but not necessarily how it works in practice; the attribution requirement can be a deterrent as the original (free) content must be linked to, devaluing the commercial product. You can read more here.

The following sources provide more background on this:

- *Why CC-BY?* by The Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA)
- *A Basic Guide to Open Educational Resources (OER)* by UNESCO answers the question “Shouldn’t I worry about ‘giving away’ my intellectual property?” on pages 9-12

How do I apply a CC license to my original content?

Marking your work with a CC license lets the world know how you want others to use it. The Creative Commons offers excellent resources on how to mark your work, covering a range of different formats. The marking your work with a CC license webpage offers guidance on how

to mark formats like webpages, offline documents, images, presentations, audio, video, and many more.

## How do I find openly licensed content?

There are a number of different resources you can use to find Creative Commons licensed content:

- Creative Commons' Content Directories
- The BC Open Textbook Authoring Guide has a section dedicated to finding openly licensed content
- OER Handbook for Educators offers a list of openly licensed repositories organized by license type

## How do I properly attribute the CC-licensed material I am using?

A condition present in all CC licenses is attribution. The Creative Commons recommends the TASL rule of thumb when providing attribution. This stands for **T**itle, **A**uthor, **S**ource, **L**icense.<sup>4</sup> Attribution doesn't need to be too complicated – the license just asks you to be reasonable. The Creative Commons has a best practices for attribution guide that provides examples of what “good and not so good” attribution looks like.

They also recommend a few resources that provide examples of attribution using a variety of different formats:

- Best Practices for Creative Commons attributions – how to attribute works you reuse

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under a Creative Commons license By New Media Rights

- [Attributing Creative Commons Materials \(PDF\)](#) by Creative Commons Australia

How do I build a derivative work from other CC licensed content?

When reusing and building on other people's works, the first thing to check is that the licenses applied to the work are compatible. There are several resources that can help here:

- [The Creative Commons License Compatibility Chart](#)
- [The BC Campus also offers information on combining CC Licenses in their Faculty OER Toolkit](#)

It's important to always attribute the original work in any derivative work that has been created. Even the simple addition of a colour change or the addition of words to a work should be documented. These resources give examples of how to provide attribution to material that you've modified:

- [The Creative Commons's best practices for attribution guide](#)
- [Clint Lalonde's OE Ontario Workshop CC BY](#) (refer to slides 15-17 for example)

## How can I tell if content is openly licensed?

It is important to carefully examine the licensing conditions of the third-party material you are including in your OER. The following tips have been adapted from the BC Open Textbook Authoring Guide<sup>5</sup> on how to navigate the Internet when using external sources:

- Just because you find something on the Internet, it doesn't mean you are free to use it
- Look for copyright information (who owns it) and licensing information (what are the conditions of use laid by the owner or copyright holder).
- If the copyright and licensing information isn't immediately apparent on a website, click around and look at links such as "Terms and Conditions" and "Permissions".
- If the copyright for is in the public domain, look for a clear marking of this.
- Be careful when using images found online. A photograph of a centuries old painting that you think is in the public domain may be copyrighted and released with a strict license ("All Rights Reserved"). See "Who Gets the Attribution for an Attribution" under Images: Captions, Attributions and Citations
- If you can't find a copyright statement or copyright license, seek permission. If you don't receive permission, don't use it.
- Even if a website is labelled as "open", unless the material is clearly marked with an open

copyright license or uses a public domain tool, seek permission. If you don't receive permission, don't use it.

- Don't use a resource for which one-time permission has been granted by the creator. (Creative Commons license permit unlimited usage). Instead, if you find material that you want to use but hasn't been released with an open copyright license, try contacting the author or creator and ask if he/she will consider doing so.
- Keep the track of the material you are using. More information of content tracking is below.

### What if I am using work that isn't openly licensed?

If using third party content that isn't openly licensed is integral to your work, seeking permission from the copyright holder is necessary. Simply asking for permission isn't enough in this case; it is important to be clear to the copyright owner that the material will be released under an open license.

Challenges may arise when trying to obtain permissions from a copyright owner. They may include:

- **Cost:** there may be a fee associated with allowing third-party content to be used in an OER, if permitted at all. Fees and payment options will vary from rights holder to rights holder.
- **Unlocatable or unresponsive owner:** It's not always possible to determine who the copyright

holder is, or it's possible you may never hear back from the party.

Give yourself plenty of time when seeking permission (8-10 weeks is recommended) in case you need to find an alternative resource.

### How do I ask for permission from a copyright holder?

How you ask for permission will vary depending on the rightsholder. More established rightsholders and publishers will often have a rights and permissions department in place to handle these requests. Look out for online forms that are required to be filled out. In other cases, you will have to send your request in the form of a letter or email. It's important to be specific about how you are going to be using the material you are requesting. Providing as much information about the item's use as you can.

Here is a sample permissions letter that you can send to a rights holder. Feel free to insert and remove details so that your request is relevant to your work.

*Dear [recipient's name],*

*I am developing an open textbook called [insert name of text/OER], funded by eCampus Ontario. This open textbook is intended to be an Open Educations Resource (OER) and will be freely available to anyone in the public via [openlibrary.ecampusontario.ca](http://openlibrary.ecampusontario.ca). Under the eCampus*

*Policy Terms, this work will be licensed under a Creative Commons CC BY 4.0 attribution license.*

*I would like to use the following material within this open textbook:*

*[Include links, page numbers, any relevant information that will help the rightsholder to identify the material]*

*I am flexible and open to discuss any restrictions with regard to modification. Please share any specifics related to acknowledgement to ensure proper attribution and recognition.*

*In granting permission, you assert that you are the rights holder. If you are not, please provide any contact information you may have.*

*You may contact me at: [insert preferred methods of communication]*

*Thank you,*

*[Name]*

How do I properly attribute a work that isn't openly licensed?

Here is an example of how to mark an item where you have received permission directly from the copyright holder:



The photo *Cats cuddling in a basket* is © 2017 John Smith. All rights reserved, used with permission.

You can read more about marking practices from the Creative Commons in the following article.

How do I keep track of permissions for everything I'm using?

When you creating, adapting, or adopting an OER, it is imperative to track the resources that you are including, particularly any modifications that are made and permissions that you have acquired. We've developed an OER Content Tracker that will help you to capture the relevant information needed to track all of your external resources.

The BC Open Textbook Authoring Guide also offers suggestions for tracking external content in the section How to Ensure that all Content is "Open" By BC Campus.

1. Canadian Intellectual Property Office, "What is Copyright?" [http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/wr03719.html?Open&wt\\_src=cipo-cpyrght-main](http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cipointernet-internetopic.nsf/eng/wr03719.html?Open&wt_src=cipo-cpyrght-main)

2. What is a licence By the South African Institute for Distance Education is licensed under CC BY 3.0
3. Frequently Asked Questions by Creative Commons CC BY
4. Title, Author, Source, License By Creative Commons is licensed under CC BY 4.0
5. How to Ensure that all Content is “Open” By BC Campus is licensed under CC BY 4.0

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## 5.

### Class Use

How can I get my newly-created open textbook to my students?

Your open textbook has been written, edited, formatted, and published. Now it's time to get it out there for students to use and, if you so choose, for other authors to adapt.

#### 1. Online hosting on a publishing platform

Many of the publishing platforms mentioned above, including Pressbooks, OMP, Scalar, Gitbooks, and OER Commons, can host your book online in the form of a website with an interactive table of contents. Some of them also allow exporting the content anytime as PDF or ePub for local reading or printing.

The advantage of this approach is that an open textbook can be a living documents, with subsequent updates, and the PDF/ePub version generated on the fly will always have the most recent edits.

The disadvantage of hosting an open textbook this way is that the website will require continuous maintenance beyond textbook creation, may not be as easily

discoverable by search engines as already established book indexes and databases, and may present difficulties with long term preservation due to changing technology.

## 2. Adding a book to a repository or database

Another approach to distributing your open textbook is exporting it in a variety of formats and adding it to an existing database or repository. These may include:

- Your university's institutional repository
- Your university's library collection
- Various open textbook collections, such as:
  - Open Textbook Library (University of Minnesota) – supports full text loading
  - SOL\*R (University of British Columbia) – supports full text loading
  - Merlot (California State University) – supports links to externally hosted materials only

The two approaches do not need to be mutually exclusive – you can keep a living version of a book in a publishing platform, and export a static edition to a repository that may, in the future, be updated with a newer version. You can also add links pointing to your resource to multiple online collections and catalogues to increase visibility.

### 3. Print on demand

Consider making your open textbook available for printing via your institution's printing shop. Printing will have a cost, but will still be much cheaper than a traditional textbook.

See the BC Campus Print on Demand Guide (currently work in progress):

- If piloting an open textbook you have produced, beta testing in your classroom using anonymous feedback forms might prove to be useful.
- Students can be invited to author chapters

What are some of the opportunities around classroom adoption of open textbooks?

Authors have an opportunity to rework their publications based on feedback. If budgeting, possibly consider time for a minor revision after the first run of the course as a requirement.

Classroom use of open textbooks offers authors use the following strategies to evaluate their materials:

- awarding bonus points (up to 10) for feedback provided by students,
- measuring resource effectiveness by providing an anonymous form for input to students
- engaging students in the creation/revision process

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Because the editing process of open textbooks can take place at any time, instructors have been known to continue developing additional resources between teaching courses based on student input such as PPTs, quiz questions, and case studies.

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## 6.

### Future Use

While the topic of open education is still fairly new and practices vary from one institution to the next, authors need to consider the value of sustainability where it comes to the resources they are developing. Sustainability goals can be written into grant submissions to demonstrate author's intent to keep a new resource current. Decisions will need to be made with regard to version control and archiving, as well as ongoing resources such as access to experts and original collaborators who have provided assistance with copyright decisions, graphic design and layout as well as instructional design input.

How often do I need to revise my open textbook to keep it current?

This decision rests with the author, although a versioning system in a form of a spreadsheet where author tracks changes they have made to their materials, might be helpful and allow each author to capture this process. Some disciplines require more robust revisioning.

How do I make sure links cited in my textbook work in the future?

External websites you link to may disappear or move. You can use free services like [perma.cc](https://perma.cc/) to preserve the online sources you cite. Create a permanent link to your resource and cite it together with the original URL as explained in this [Harvard Perma.cc Guide](#).

When I create a new edition, could I archive my older edition?

Older versions of your open textbooks can be archived in your institutional repository.

What should I do if I change my curriculum and my open textbook is no longer suitable for classroom use?

If an instructor changes their curriculum, they might need to consider revising their materials more significantly or adopting another existing resource which might align more with new goals of a course. Before revising an existing open textbook it might be a good idea to evaluate time commitment dedicated to revisions vs. creating a new resource from scratch.



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## 7.

### Resources

#### Global Resource: Open books

##### eCampus Open Library

- eCampus Ontario Open textbook Library, launched in Spring 2017 and currently contains 180 open texts.

##### CCCOER

- Community College Consortium for Open Educational Resources

##### DOAB

- The Directory of Open Access Books is a collection containing 3,000 academic and peer-reviewed Open Access titles.

##### Global Text Project

- The Global Text Project is a joint project of the Terry College of Business of the University of Georgia and The Daniels College of Business of the University of Denver. A collection of open textbooks in the areas of Business, Computing,

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Education, Health, Science and Social Science.

### HathiTrust Digital Library

- HathiTrust is a partnership of academic & research institutions, offering a collection of millions of titles digitized from libraries around the world.

### Internet Archive

- The Internet Archive is a non-profit library of free books, movies, music, and more. The material is organized into various thematic or institutional collections.

### Open Academics Textbook Catalog

- Hosted by the University of Minnesota, this site is a catalog of 150 open textbooks covering Business, Accounting, IT, Economics, Math, Humanities, Law, Math & Statistics, Natural, Physical and Social Sciences.

### OAPEN

- Open Access Publishing in European Networks is a non-profit foundation dedicated to publishing Open Access academic books. The platform specializes in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Collaborators include Oxford University Press and Routledge.

### Open Library

- Open Library is an open library project aiming toward the ambitious goal of “a web page for every book ever published” (Homepage). Over 1,000,000 free books are available, along with another eBook lending library of over 250,000 books.

### Open Stax

- OpenStax College offers students free textbooks that are peer-reviewed & written by professional content developers.

### Orange Grove Text

- Florida’s operational repository project of open source educational materials.

### Project Gutenberg

- Project Gutenberg is a collection of over 49,000 free ebooks, including many classics. All books on Project Gutenberg were previously published by reputable publishers. Books are available in HTML, plain text, or common ebook formats.

### InTech

- The world’s largest publisher of open access science, technology, and medicine books. InTech has made over 3,000 books available for free download.

### University of Oxford Text Archive

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- A collection of literary and linguistic resources for use in higher education, research, teaching, and learning. Resources available in XML, HTML, ePub, mobi, and plain text. Many resources provide links to automatically analyze the texts using Voyant.

### Perseus Digital Library

- An online collection of primarily Classical texts, including Ancient Greek and Roman materials, but also Arabic, Germanic, 19th century American, and Renaissance material.

### Connexions

- Content Commons of free, open-licensed educational materials in fields such as music, electrical engineering and psychology.

### Wikibooks

- Wikibooks is an Open Textbook project containing over 2800 titles. Books are not formally peer-reviewed, and beyond the project's featured books there is little on-site means of evaluation. Many books are only partially complete.

### Other Formats

#### SOL\*R

- A repository of learning objects created by British Columbia higher education faculty.

Many projects that were funded through the OPDF (Online Program Development Fund) and were created by C2T2 reside in this repository.

### OER Commons

- Worldwide learning network of shared teaching and learning materials.

### Multimedia Educational Resource

- The oldest OER collection on the web with objects designed primarily for higher education.

### CCCOER

- Community College Consortium for Open Educational Resources

### The Saylor Foundation

- A free and open collection of college-level courses.

### Other Toolkits

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This is where you can add appendices or other back matter.