

Faculty OER Toolkit

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Visit [BCcampus Open Education](#) to learn about open education in British Columbia.

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Contents

<u>Introduction</u>	1
 <u>Part I. What is OER?</u>	
1. <u>OER definition</u> CC BY (Attribution)	3
2. <u>Why use OER?</u>	5
3. <u>Types of OER (and where to find them)</u>	8
 <u>Part II. Adopt/Adapt vs Creation</u>	
4. <u>Adopt/Adapt vs Creation</u>	11
5. <u>Adaptation</u>	12
6. <u>Adoption</u>	15
7. <u>Evaluating OER</u>	17
 <u>Part III. Licensing and Copyright</u>	
8. <u>Copyright</u>	21
9. <u>Creative Commons Licensing</u>	22
10. <u>Combining CC Licences</u>	24
11. <u>Creative Commons Alternatives</u>	26
12. <u>Attribution Statements</u>	27
13. <u>Keeping Track of Changes</u>	29
 <u>Appendix - Accessibility and Usability</u>	31
<u>Versioning History</u>	32

Introduction

Introduction

The *Faculty OER Toolkit* is intended as an introductory guide for faculty interested in incorporating Open Educational Resources (OER) into their teaching practice. Beginning with a definition of OER, reasons to use OER, and online collections of OER to use, the Toolkit also covers basic information about adapting, adopting, and evaluating OER. Additionally, there is information about licensing and copyright, including an explanation of [Creative Commons licenses](#) and attribution statements. Throughout the *Toolkit*, links are provided to more in-depth resources on topics including adopting open textbooks, adapting open textbooks, and ensuring OER are truly accessible for all users.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to [Lauri Aesoph](#) at [BCcampus](#) for authoring the [BCcampus Open Education Adaptation Guide](#) and the [BCcampus Open Education Adoption Guide](#), both of which have been invaluable tools while compiling this resource.

I

What is OER?

1.

OER definition

Definition

The term [OER \(Open Educational Resources\)](#) was first defined by UNESCO in 2002 as “any type of educational materials that are in the public domain or introduced with an open license” and can “range from textbooks to curricula, syllabi, lecture notes, assignments, tests, projects, audio, video and animation.”

[Creative Commons](#) created the [“What is OER?” table](#) below to compare different definitions of OER from various sources.

	Open copyright license required	Right of access, adaptation, and republication	Non-discriminatory (rights given to everyone, everywhere)	Does not limit use or form (does not include NonCommercial limitations)
Hewlett Foundation	✓	✓	✓	✓
OECD		✓		
UNESCO	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cape Town Declaration	✓	✓	✓	
Wikieducator OER Handbook		✓	✓	✓
OER Commons		✓	✓	✓

Although many people think of OER and Open Education as generally referring to online-only material and courses, this is not the case. Many open textbooks, for example, are also available in hard copy, or can be printed if a user prefers.

The 5 Rs of Openness

As seen in the table above, OER differ from traditional educational resources in their licensing and permissions. Namely, the “open” aspect of OER can be defined by [David Wiley’s 5R Framework](#):¹

- **Retain:** the right to make, own, and control copies of the content

1. This material was created by David Wiley and published freely under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license at: <http://opencontent.org/blog/archives/3221>

- **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)
- **Revise:** the right to adapt, adjust, modify, or alter the content itself (e.g., translate the content into another language)
- **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)
- **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)

OER Myth busting

Think OER are too difficult to find or complicated to use? Worried that they will take too much time and effort to implement? Concerned about copyright and intellectual property protection? The [OER Policy for Europe](#) has addressed many of these concerns on their [OER Mythbusting!](#) site.

Attributions

The [“What is OER?” table](#) at the top of this page has been copied from [Creative Commons](#) and is used under a [CC BY 4.0 license](#).

The 5R Framework on this page was retrieved from [SFU’s Open Educational Resources](#) research guide and is used under a [CC BY 4.0 license](#).

2.

Why use OER?

Benefits of using OER

As can be seen in the [BCOEL \(formerly BCOER\) infographic](#) below, there are many reasons to use OER, including increasing student retention and providing more relevant materials for your classes.

BCOER

This poster is a creation of the BCOER, a group of BC postsecondary librarians working together to support the use of quality Open Educational Resources (OER). For more information about BCOER and its activities, go to open.bccampus.ca.

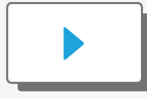
OERs CAN BE



Course Materials



Open Textbooks



Videos



Lesson Plans



Software



Games

Full courses, learning objects, tests or any other tools, materials, or techniques that support access to knowledge.

BENEFITS FOR FACULTY



Increases student retention by reducing costs



Assures academic freedom to modify or add content to your specifications



Extends your academic profile



Provides more relevant and engaging materials for your students

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS



Low cost or free



Easy to find and access -- even before classes start



More customised and relevant

MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING 5Rs



SOME FACTS



82%

Textbook costs rose 82% between 2003 and 2013

65%



of students report **NOT** purchasing a textbook because of its high price

Textbook cost savings for BC students since 2012

\$352,988

4X

the rate of inflation in overall consumer prices (CPI) during the same time

HUNDREDS

of textbooks have already been adopted across Canada by faculty!

Supported by



References

"Open Educational Resources." Hewlett Foundation News. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 July 2014. <<http://www.hewlett.org/programs/education/open-educational-resources>>.

"Lumen Learning – About OER." Lumen Learning. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 July 2014. <<http://lumenlearning.com/about-oer/>>.

"The Affordable College Textbook Act" SPARC website. Web. 11 July 2014. <<http://www.sparc.arl.org/sites/default/files/Affordable%20College%20Textbook%20Act.pdf>>.

"Open Educational Resources: Benefits for Faculty and Students" Open.Michigan. Web. 11 July 2014. <<http://open.umich.edu/sites/default/files/3659/PDFs/>>.

Why Open Education matters

The following video explains why the move to Open Education (and the use of OER) is so important.



An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/facultyoertoolkit/?p=87>

[Why Open Education Matters](#) from [Blink Tower](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Faculty Perspectives on Open Textbooks

In the following two videos, you will hear from faculty who are using open textbooks and some of the reasons why.



An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/facultyoertoolkit/?p=87>

[Why use open textbooks? Benefits for students](#) from [BCcampus](#) on [Vimeo](#).



An interactive or media element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: <https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/facultyoertoolkit/?p=87>

[What instructors say about open textbooks](#) from [BCcampus](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Attributions

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3.

Types of OER (and where to find them)

There are a multitude of OER out there to choose from, including textbooks, courses, multimedia, data, and supplementary materials. These can be found by searching regular search engines (like Google) by using certain keywords but it is much easier to find them through dedicated OER repositories or websites. The examples below are just a sampling of such repositories and websites.

Repositories

- [SOL*R](#) (Shareable Online Learning Resources): This is BCcampus' OER repository.
- [Creative Commons Search](#): A repository of various types of media, including images, music, and videos.
- [OER Commons](#): A large collection of a variety of types of OER, including textbooks, courses, and ancillary materials.
- [MERLOT](#): "a curated collection of free and open online teaching, learning, and faculty development services contributed and used by an international education community."
- [OER Handbook for Educators](#): "a guide for those who are just getting started in the creation of open educational resources (OER)."

Textbooks

- BCcampus's [BC OpenEd Resources](#) page is a good place to start to find both general information about OER and a [collection of textbooks](#) that have been "created ... or ... re-created from existing [OER] by B.C. post-secondary faculty, reviewed by B.C. faculty and made available under a Creative Commons license."
- [OpenStax](#): Supported by Rice University, OpenStax has a huge collection of open, peer-reviewed textbooks on a large variety of subjects.
- [Project Gutenberg](#): A collection of tens of thousands of digitized books available for download; audiobooks are also available.
- [AU Press](#): Athabasca University's AU Press publishes open access journals and books with a focus on Canada, the North American West, and the Circumpolar North.

Courses

- [Khan Academy](#): A collection of instructional videos and practice exercises on topics including math, science, programming, history, English, economics, and standardized test

prep.

- [MIT OpenCourseWare](#): offers free access to almost all MIT course content
- [Saylor Academy](#): a non-profit organization committed to providing free and open online courses
- [Coursera](#): an educational platform partnered with dozens of prestigious universities and institutions (including MoMA, Stanford, Yale, the University of Toronto, and the University of London)

Multimedia

- [Creative Commons Search](#): A repository of various types of media, including images, music, and videos
- [Vimeo](#): Videos with a CC license can be found through Advanced Search options
- [Flickr: Creative Commons](#): Flickr is an “online photo management and sharing application” and many photos are available under CC licenses; Flickr allows searching by type of license.

Supplemental materials

Supplemental, or ancillary, OER materials can include lecture notes, lesson plans, PowerPoint presentations, assignments, and activities.

- [PhET](#): Interactive math and science simulations with lesson plans and activities
- [OER Commons](#): A large collection of a variety of types of OER, including textbooks, courses, and ancillary materials

Other OER lists

Many universities have research guides related to finding OER and that provide lists of various repositories and resources, so be sure to check your home institution.

- [Simon Fraser University guide called “Finding and evaluating OER: Open Educational Resources”](#)
- [University of British Columbia research guide to open education](#)
- [Kwantlen Polytechnic University research guide to open educational resources](#)
- [British Columbia Institute of Technology guide to open education](#)
- [University of Victoria open educational resources site](#)
- [University of Northern British Columbia guide to open access in scholarly communication](#)

II

Adopt/Adapt vs Creation

4.

Adopt/Adapt vs Creation

Why adaptation or adoption?

Many educators feel driven to create the “perfect” resources for their classes and it can be difficult put aside that perfection and use other people’s creations. However, the number, variety, and quality of OER available freely is such that any educator should be able to find resources they can readily (with or without adaptations) put to use within their classrooms. And adaptation or adoption of OER will almost always be more efficient than creating teaching materials from scratch.

[Jan M. Pawlowski](#) addressed one of the reasons behind this reluctance in his article, [Emotional Ownership as the Key to OER Adoption](#).

More resources

For more complete information about and instructions on how to adapt an open textbook, please visit the [BCcampus Open Education Adaptation Guide](#).

For more complete information about and instruction on how to adopt an open textbook, please visit the [BCcampus Open Education Adoption Guide](#).

For a list of open textbooks that have been evaluated and are available for adoption and adaptation, please visit [BCcampus OpenEd](#).

5.

Adaptation

For more complete information about and instructions on how to adapt an open textbook, please visit the [BCCampus Open Education Adaptation Guide](#).

Adaptation

The term “adaptation” is commonly used to describe the process of making changes to an existing work. Though we can also replace “adapt” with revise, modify, alter, customize, or other synonym that describes the act of making a change. The example below refers to adapting an open textbook but any OER (assignments, videos, lecture notes, diagrams, etc) can be adapted.

In addition to cost savings to students, one of the biggest advantages of choosing an open textbook is it gives faculty the legal right to add to, adapt, or delete the content of the textbook to fit their specific course without obtaining permission from the copyright holder. This is possible because the copyright holder has already granted permission by releasing their work using an open — or Creative Commons — licence. This type of licence gives users permission to use and reuse, share, copy, retain and modify the textbook without consulting the author.

Below are some examples of how an open textbook can be adapted by adding in your own Learning Objectives, Exercises, and Key Takeaways.

Learning Objectives

Type your learning objectives here.

- First
- Second

Exercises

Type your exercises here.

- First
- Second

Key Takeaways

Type your key takeaways here.

- First
- Second

Reasons to adapt an open textbook

One of the benefits of using an openly licensed textbook or other educational resource is that you are free to adapt it to fit your needs. In other words, you can adjust the educational resources to fit your course curriculum, not the other way around.

Below are 10 more reasons adapting an open textbook might be for you:

1. Address a particular teaching style or learning style
2. Adjust for a different grade or course level
3. Address diversity needs
4. Meet a cultural, regional, or national preference
5. Make the material more accessible for people with disabilities
6. Add material contributed by students or material suggested by students
7. Translate the material into another language
8. Correct errors or inaccuracies
9. Update the book with current information
10. Add more media or links to other resources

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The “Reasons” above are adapted from WikiEducator, [“Adapt” in OER Handbook for Educators](#) and [Why Remix Open Educational Resources?](#), created by Liam Green-Hughes, both used under a [CC BY](#) license.

6.

Adoption

The information in this chapter refers to adopting an open textbook but any OER (assignments, videos, lecture notes, diagrams, etc.) can be adopted for classroom use (using many of the steps below).

For more complete information about and instruction on how to adopt an open textbook, please visit the [BCcampus Open Education Adoption Guide](#).

Adopt an open textbook

If you are an instructor looking for an open textbook to assign to your class, here are some suggested ways to go about using a textbook from the [B.C. Open Collection](#).

First, we often get questions from people outside of British Columbia about whether or not they can use textbooks in our collection. The answer is yes. You don't have to be from British Columbia to use our open textbooks. Open textbooks are not geographically limited. Anyone from Canada, the United States, or any other country in the world can use these resources.

Using an open textbook for your class

1. **Find the right textbook.** Search the [B.C. Open Collection](#).
2. **Review and evaluate** to see if it matches your criteria and based on content, presentation, online accessibility, production options, platform compatibility, delivery options, interactivity, consistency between online and printed versions, and available ancillary material (test banks, PowerPoints, etc.). A suggested source for evaluating an OER is the [Faculty Guide for Evaluating Open Education Resources \[PDF\]](#).
3. **Decide if you want to use as is or modify it.** One of the benefits of open textbooks is flexibility to modify and customize them for specific course designs as much or as little as you desire. If you want to make edits or append content, make sure the Creative Commons license allows for that (every CC license except the non-derivative license allows for modifications). If you are interested in modifying an open textbook, check out our section on [how to modify an open textbook](#).
4. **Distribute to your students.** There are a number of ways in which you can do this.
 - If you're using a textbook from this site, provide the link to the textbook to your students. They will have the option to select which file type they would like to download, or they can purchase a low cost printed version from the BCcampus print on demand service.

- Alternatively, you can download copies of the book and put them on another site. Some examples of where you could put your own copies of the book files are:
 - Your institutional LMS (Learning Management System). Load the book files into your Moodle, Desire2Learn, Blackboard or Canvas site and make the books available to your students via the LMS.
 - Use an online file sharing service like Dropbox or Google Docs. Upload a copy of the book files to Dropbox or Google Docs and send your student the link to that copy.
 - If you have a faculty website, put copies of the files on that website and send students to your website to download your copy of the textbook.
 - Approach your local institutional bookstore or print shop to see if they can make printed copies of the books available for your students. Many institutional print shops can create low cost printed versions of textbooks and make them available to students. Keep in mind that textbooks that have a specific non-commercial clause (CC BY-NC) cannot be sold with a markup or at a profit. However, charging a modest cost-recovery fee for physical textbooks is considered reasonable.
5. **Let us know.** If you adopt an open textbook from this site, tell us about it by filling out an [open textbook adoption form](#). Faculty adoption information is important to the long-term viability of the open textbook project. Plus we will add you to a mailing list to inform you of when the textbook is being modified or additional resources are available for it.

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7.

Evaluating OER

Evaluating OER

The [B.C. Open Education Librarians](#) have developed a useful guide to assist faculty with the open textbook and OER evaluation process. This [Faculty Guide for Evaluating Open Education Resources \[PDF\]](#) has been released under a [CC BY 4.0 International](#) license.

Faculty Guide for Evaluating Open Education Resources

With so many freely available resources online, choosing OER can be overwhelming. This checklist contains some suggestions for faculty when choosing resources for use in the classroom.

RELEVANCE

- ☐ Does the information directly address one or more of the class objectives?

ACCURACY

- ☐ Is the information accurate? Are there major content errors or omissions?
- ☐ Are there spelling errors or typos?
- ☐ Has the material been peer reviewed?

PRODUCTION QUALITY

- ☐ Is the information clear and understandable?
- ☐ Is the layout and interface easy to navigate?
- ☐ Do the design features enhance learning?
- ☐ For multimedia resources, are the audio/video quality high?

ACCESSIBILITY

- ☐ Is the resource available in alternative formats (e.g. .doc or .odf)?
- ☐ For audio or video resources, is there a transcript or subtitles?

INTERACTIVITY

- ☐ Does the resource encourage active learning and class participation? If not, are you able to add that to the resource?
- ☐ Are there opportunities for students to test their understanding of the material (e.g. a video with embedded questions)?

LICENSING

- ☐ Does the license allow for educational reuse of the materials?
- ☐ Does the license allow modifications or adaptations of the materials? If so, can you modify the resource to better fit the class objectives or encourage active learning?

FURTHER INFORMATION

JISC. (n.d.). *Open Educational Resources infoKit* [wiki]. Retrieved from <http://bit.ly/oerinfokit>.

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This guide is a creation of the BCOER, a group of BC postsecondary librarians working together to support the use of quality Open Educational Resources (OER). For more information about BCOER and its activities, go to



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For more complete information about and instructions on how to adapt an open textbook, please visit the [BCcampus Open Education Adaptation Guide](#).

For more complete information about and instruction on how to adopt an open textbook, please visit the [BCcampus Open Education Adoption Guide](#).

For a list of open textbooks that have been evaluated and are available for adoption and adaptation, please visit [BCcampus OpenEd](#). Many of the resources in the [B.C. Open Collection](#) have been reviewed by B.C. post-secondary faculty.

III

Licensing and Copyright

8.

Copyright

Copyright definition

According to the [Government of Canada's guide to copyright](#), copyright is defined as “the sole right to produce or reproduce a work or a substantial part of it in any form” and it “provides protection for literary, artistic, dramatic or musical works (including computer programs) and other subject-matter known as performer’s performances, sound recordings and communication signals.”

For more information about copyright, please contact your institution’s Copyright Office or Copyright Librarian.

Copyright and Creative Commons

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The video below discusses how Creative Commons licenses allow creators to modify copyright terms.



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9.

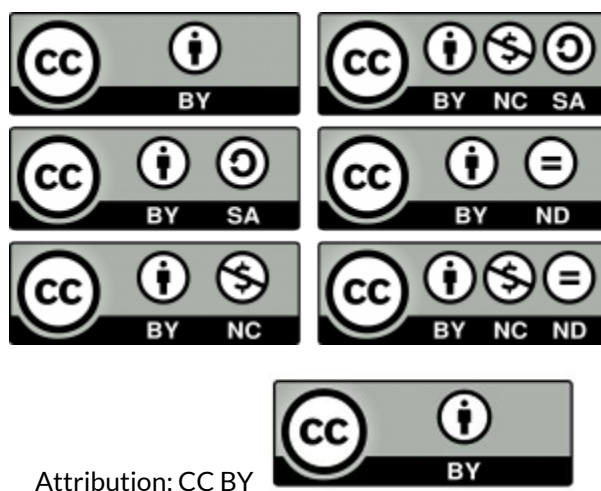
Creative Commons Licensing

Choose a license

If you are adapting an existing open textbook, the adaptations you make will be released with whatever open licence you choose, while the rest of the book will be released under the licence of the original book. In other words, you need to respect the licence of the original work. You cannot license what you do not create. You can only attach a [CC BY \(Creative Commons Attribution\)](#) or other open licence to the parts of the book that you have created and that are new.

However, there is a “catch.” If the textbook you are adapting has a **ShareAlike** condition ([CC BY-SA 4.0](#)) stipulated, then you must release the entire book using the same licence as the original book.

Below are the symbols and definitions of each of the Creative Commons licences. If you are unsure which CC licence you would like to use, you can use the Creative Commons [Choose a License tool](#).



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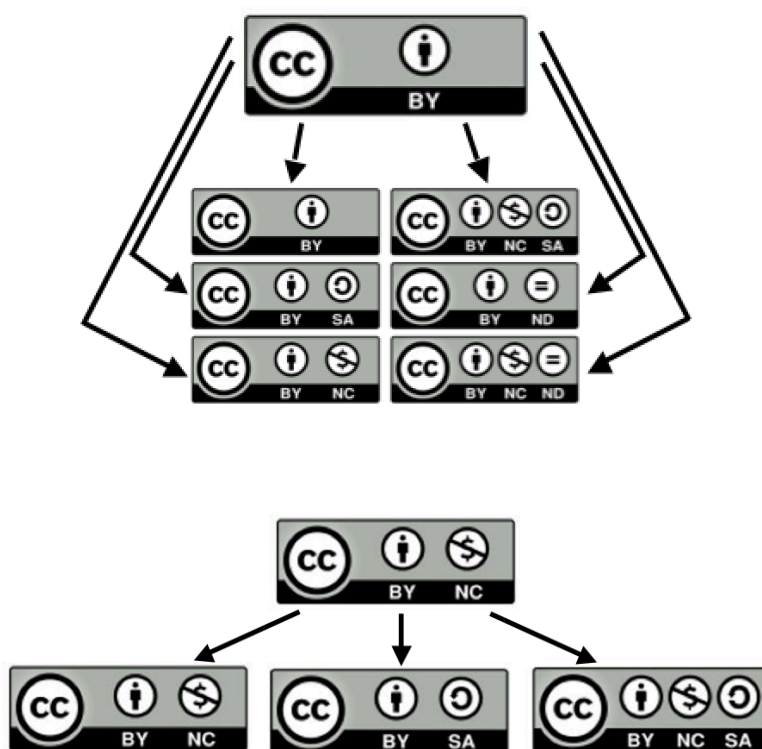
10.

Combining CC Licences

Combining CC licenses

When adapting an open textbook (or other OER), you may want to incorporate other people's works into your adaptation. In order to do that, you must ensure that any existing licences on the work you're adapting or including are compatible with each other.

For example, as explained in the [chapter on Creative Commons licensing](#), the [CC BY licence](#) is the least restrictive and is compatible with all of the other [CC licences](#). However, if you want to include a work that has a [CC BY-SA licence](#), you must use that same licence with your adaptation (which may conflict with other licences already attached to the work). Creative Commons provides more information about [CC BY-SA licence compatibility](#).



[The Orange Grove](#) repository's video below further explains how CC licenses can be combined.



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11.

Creative Commons Alternatives

Alternative licenses

While [Creative Commons licensing](#) is a well-recognized, straight-forward, flexible type of licensing that is strongly associated with OER, there are other types of open licensing available.

GNU



The [GNU General Public License](#) is a “free, copyleft license for software and other kinds of works.”

Copyleft



[Copyleft](#) is comparable to the [ShareAlike](#) aspect of a Creative Commons license.

Public Domain



Works in the public domain are not copyrighted. Different countries have different copyright laws and lengths, however, which must be carefully checked.

Creative Commons has [public domain tools](#) that allow users to place their works in the public domain.

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12.

Attribution Statements

Attributions

Regardless of the [Creative Commons license](#) you choose for your OER, *all* CC licenses require at least an attribution to the original creator of the work (the “BY” part of a CC license). Below are some examples of how to create attribution statements for text and media.

This [attribution builder](#) from [Open Washington](#) can also be a useful tool. [Creative Commons](#) also has [best practices for attribution](#).

Examples of attribution statements

All Creative Commons licenses contain an attribution (BY) clause. This means that you must include a statement that gives credit to, or attributes, the creator of the work from which you have borrowed, whether it’s text, an image, a video, or other item. If you have made a change, indicate that in your attribution statement.

As far as how and where to place attribution statements for text or media taken from another source or sources, best practices state that you should place them at the bottom of each affected web page. Clearly mark all of these with a heading called: “Attributions”. Several attribution statements can be listed under this heading. Here are examples.

Example of an attribution statement for adapted text

This chapter is an adaptation of [Natural Disasters and Human Impacts](#) (on [Open Geography Education](#)) by R. Adam Dastrup and Maura Hahnenberger, and is used under a [CC BY-SA 4.0 International](#) license.

Note:

- The statement is clear, simple, and contains all elements required for a complete attribution: title of the work used, author(s), and license type. A link is provided to the original work, the home page of the website (this is optional), and the license type.
- There is no need to name the adapting author in this statement. This information should either

be included on the **Book Info** page as a main author OR if you want to indicate which author wrote/adapted which chapter, you can use the **Chapter Author** option at the bottom of each chapter/web page in Pressbooks.

- If the book is to be CC BY licensed, then you will need to address the conditions dictated by the license for each resource you are using in your adaptation. At the bottom of the **Chapter** page in Pressbooks, there is an option to set the license type for that page which will override, for this page only, the overarching license chosen for the book on the Book Info page.
- If the chapter contains some original material AND some material from another source, then rather than saying “This chapter is an adaptation of....”, say “This chapter contains material taken from....”.

Example of an attribution statement for an adapted image

Figure 1.2

[Dog](#) by [David Locke](#) is used under a [CC BY 2.0 license](#). Modifications to this photo include cropping.

Note:

- The statement is clear, simple and contains all elements required for a complete attribution: title of the image, photographer, and license type, as well as a note of the changes made. A link is provided to the original work, the home page of the photographer (if available), and the license type.

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13.

Keeping Track of Changes

Provenance

When adapting or adopting OER, it is imperative to track the provenance of the resources as they are modified and remixed.

Keep a record of all changes and additions

As the author, you retain copyright of all new material you create. This means that even if the new material you create is released under an open license, as the author, you will receive attribution for your contribution.

As you edit and make changes (text and images) and/or add new material, such as a chapter or section within a chapter, keep a list so these additions/changes:

- Can be included as part of the **Copyright Notice**
- Can be accurately attributed to you, the author

Minor changes, such as fixing grammatical or spelling mistakes, don't need to be documented.

If you add material from another openly licensed work to your adaptation, especially text, record the source and where it is used in your adapted version. This information is needed for the wording and placement of each **attribution statement** required for each open [CC BY \(Attribution\)](#) licensed work you use. For more information, see [Attribution Statement in the BCcampus Open Education Adaptation Guide](#).

Provenance document examples

Below are examples of provenance documents that could be used to track changes and attributions when adapting OER. The term “Collegial collections” can refer to resources adopted/adapted from a colleague or inter-departmentally – these resources are often openly shared within a faculty team (or department) but are not openly shared in an OER repository.

File type	OER	“Collegial collections”
PDF	OER provenance document	Collegial Collections provenance document
Word	OER provenance document	Collegial Collections provenance document

Attribution

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“[OER provenance document](#)” by [BCcampus](#) is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

“[Collegial Collections provenance document](#)” by [BCcampus](#) is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](#).

Appendix - Accessibility and Usability

The [BCcampus Open Education Accessibility Toolkit](#) is a valuable resource for those who want to ensure that their OER are truly accessible for all students.

Attributions

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Versioning History

This page provides a record of changes made to this toolkit. Each set of edits is acknowledged with a 0.01 increase in the version number. The exported files for this toolkit reflect the most recent version.

If you find an error in this toolkit, please fill out the [Report an Open Textbook Error](#) form.

Version	Date	Details
1.0	March 8, 2017	Toolkit is published.
1.01	June 27, 2019	Changed from Open Textbook theme to Clarke theme.
1.02	October 1, 2019	ISBNs added: Print and eBook.
1.03	February 18, 2020	Replaced incorrect link to AU Press in Types of OER (and where to find them).
1.04	June 10, 2020	Replaced outdated link to UBC OER LibGuide in Types of OER (and where to find them) .
1.05	September 22, 2022	Updated links throughout the book. Ensured links opened in the same tab and fixed broken links.