

PLS Clear

Clarifying Permissions

A Guide for Editorial Teams

Navigating permissions can be a daunting and time-consuming task, especially if you're new to the process. To get you started, we've compiled a list of frequently asked questions about the permissions process, and how PLSclear can help.

This guide should only be used as a point of reference, it is not legal advice on copyright. When in doubt, we always recommend seeking permission from the rightsholder.



When do we need to request permission?

If you or your author intends to use work protected by copyright, permission will need to be requested from the rights holder. A rightsholder can be the:

- Publisher
- Original author, or the author's estate
- Author's agent

Typically, the rights to a published work are held by the publisher, so we advise you to seek permission from them as your first step.



When don't we need to request permission?

There are some circumstances where you might be able to reuse content without needing permission. If the content you or your author intends to use is:

- [Out of copyright](#)
- Covered by a [Creative Commons licence](#), that doesn't require you to seek permission
- Licensed under the [Open Government Licence](#)
- Falls under a [copyright exception](#)



What happens if we use material without asking permission?

Using copyrighted work without a licence can lead to a range of negative outcomes, such as:

- The work may be redacted, or removed from public access
- The rightsholder may demand an acknowledgement to appear in the work
- Payment of a fee or revenue share may be required
- A public apology may be requested by the rightsholder
- Legal action may be taken



What is our responsibility as an editorial team?

When collaborating with an author on a project that involves third-party material, ensure that you have cleared all of the rights you need for the new work, including all formats, language rights and territories.

It's good practice to ask your authors to provide you with any permissions licence agreements approved for the project.

If you need further support, the following short course provided by The Rights and Licensing Hub gives an overview of licensing-in content, including third party permissions.

- [Rights Management Essentials: Acquiring Rights](#)



What is PLSclear & how can it help?

[PLSclear](#) is an online permissions clearance service. It helps users identify the correct publisher for a title and allows them to request permission to use content from books, journals, magazines, and websites.



Can our authors use PLSclear to clear their own permissions?

Absolutely!

In order to submit a request they just need to [register for a free, PLSclear account](#). PLSclear's [Knowledge Hub](#) also has a range of helpful resources for using this service, including:

- [Permissions Checklist](#), to help determine if you're ready to start clearing permission

- [Clearing Permissions Through PLSclear](#), an introductory guide



We work with freelancers & permissions agents, can they use PLSclear?

Yes!

PLSclear was specifically designed so that freelancers and permissions agents working on behalf of multiple publishers could use the system.

Licensee names

Multiple contact names and addresses can be saved in a PLSclear account, to use on different licences. Within the PLSclear Account Settings page, you can add, manage, and delete addresses.



Can you pay for licences through PLSclear?

Yes. By default, you are able to make payment by credit or debit card.

As the publisher, if you have agreed to pay your author's permissions fees we also offer an invoicing option; however, this is at the discretion of PLSclear.

Invoicing on behalf of multiple publishers

Freelancers and permissions agents can be linked to multiple publisher billing accounts. They can select the appropriate publisher account they want to bill, when agreeing to pay a licence fee by invoice.

Got more questions?

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