

Copyright for Students – Thesis

Frequently Asked Questions

https://library.usask.ca/copyright/students/thesis_FAQ.php

1. Do I own copyright in my thesis?

Yes. However, upon submission of your thesis, you will be required to allow the University Library to post your thesis in the university's online research archive [HARVEST](#), as well as permit the [University Library](#) and [Library and Archives Canada](#) to preserve and make your thesis available on the Internet and searchable databases. These licences clearly stipulate that you own the copyright to your thesis, but that you have allowed "non-exclusive" use of your thesis to the University Library and Library and Archives Canada.

2. I am writing a manuscript-style thesis. What do I need know about copyright?

A manuscript-style thesis “is a document that includes one or more scholarly manuscripts written in a manner suitable for publication in appropriate venues”

(<https://cgps.usask.ca/onboarding/blueprint/sub/manuscript-style-theses-and-dissertations.php>). If you are writing a manuscript-style thesis, the key things to know about copyright are:

- You are responsible for [acquiring written permission](#) from any co-authors/copyright owners of any manuscript that you would like to include in your thesis and also to inform the co-authors/copyright owners of any modifications you intend to make to the manuscript when you use it in your thesis.
- The copyright owner may require payment in exchange for use of the manuscript and the student is responsible for that payment.
- On the first page or in the preface of each copyright-protected manuscript used in the thesis, please include a statement that the manuscript was used “under licence” or “with permission” from the copyright owner.
- If you would like to include a manuscript for which you are the sole author, you may still need to acquire copyright permission if you have transferred your copyright to the publisher or journal who has published (or will publish) the manuscript.

- The copyright permissions that you receive for including copyright-protected materials in your thesis should be included as appendices in your thesis.

For more information about writing a manuscript-style thesis, please visit this [Manuscript-Style Theses and Dissertations](#) page which includes a section about copyright and related section about co-authored manuscripts.

3. Do I need copyright permission to put an image (e.g., photo, maps, diagram, figure) in my thesis?

Up until the time that your thesis is added to the [HARVEST](#) electronic research archive, it is considered a private research paper and images can be used without permission as long as they are properly cited and adhere to the university's [Fair Dealing Guidelines](#). However, once your thesis is distributed through HARVEST, permission from the copyright holders of any images or figures used in your thesis may be required.

For information about images for which copyright permission is not required to include them in your thesis, please see question #6 below.

4. How do I determine who the copyright holder is and how do I go about getting permission from them?

The University of British Columbia's [copyright website](#) (see the “How to Obtain Permission” section) includes useful information for grad students about how to identify copyright holders and where to go to request copyright permission. The earlier that you can start the permission request process, the better, as copyright holders can be difficult to find or get a hold of and sometimes they take a long time to respond. If you require any assistance, please feel free to contact the [Copyright Coordinator](#).

5. What if I'm not granted copyright permission in time or the copyright fee being charged is too expensive?

If permission is not granted in time for you to submit your thesis to the HARVEST (or if the copyright holder is asking for a fee that you decide not to pay), the image(s) for which clearance/permission was not received must be removed from your thesis before it is submitted to HARVEST. In the space where the image was removed, you would then add a statement indicating that the image was removed due to copyright restrictions and include an image description and full citation where the image can be found.

Here is an example statement: **“Figure 3 has been removed due to copyright restrictions. It was a diagram of the apparatus used in performing the experiment, showing the changes made by the investigating team. Original source: Wu, G. and Thompson, J.R. (2008) Effect of Ketone Bodies on Dairy Cattle. Biochem J. 255:139-144.”** (This example citation was retrieved from The [University of British Columbia’s](#) copyright website, [CC BY-SA 4.0](#))

6. Are there any types of images for which I don’t need to acquire copyright permission to include them in my thesis?

Copyright permission would not be required for including the following types of images in your thesis:

1. An image for which you are the only copyright owner (e.g., an image that you created alone and for which you have not transferred copyright to a publisher or anyone else).
2. Images that are in the [Public Domain](#) (i.e., are no longer protected by copyright). **Please note that “Public Domain” does not mean that anything publicly available on the Internet can be used without copyright permission. Most works on the Internet are protected by copyright and would require permission for being included in a thesis.**
3. Images that have [Creative Commons](#) copyright licences.
4. Some Canadian federal government materials (e.g., materials protected by [Crown copyright](#)).
5. Some images accessed through the USask University Library’s electronic resources. For additional details, please visit this [Re-using figures](#) webpage.

7. What about copying text into my thesis? Do I need permission for including quotes in my thesis?

With regard to copying text into your thesis, permission should be acquired for use of long quotations or excerpts. A short quote that you would include in the body of your text would not require copyright permission and a block quotation would not necessarily require permission. There is no exact word count that is the maximum amount of text that could be used before permission is required. It would be advisable to err on the side of caution and seek permission for long quotations. If you are unsure about what constitutes a long quotation, you can consult with your thesis advisor and the College of Graduate Studies. Your citation style guidelines (e.g., APA, MLA, etc.) may include helpful information on this as well.

Based on information from the [University of Manitoba](#) copyright website and the [University of British Columbia](#) copyright website.

You may also be interested in:

- the College of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies [Thesis Roadmap](#);
- the College of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies [Policies and Procedures Manual](#), [17. Intellectual Property Rights of Students](#); and
- Graduate learning support from the [Learning Hub](#).