


# Copyright and Social Media at SFU—Guidelines

Most material found on the Internet is protected by copyright. This includes written documents of all kinds, photographs and illustrations, website designs and content, blog posts, email, videos, music and many other materials. The fact that someone has made their work available online doesn't change their right to have some control over how it is further used.

Material doesn't need to be marked with © to be protected by copyright.

## Copyright and Social Media Tips

- You can *repost* or use a “share” link (e.g.  ) to post just about anything - as long as it was posted legitimately (i.e. by its copyright holder or official source, such as another SFU department, another university, organization, business or news outlet).
- Instead of reposting someone else's repost, follow the link back to the material and share it from the original site yourself.
- Don't copy and paste an image, text or only part of the original material.
- Linking is a good alternative to copying material, as long as you link to the original source.
- As always with social media, consider the content and its appropriateness for posting through an SFU account.

*If you have received notice from your social media provider or a third party that something you posted infringes copyright, you can contact the Copyright Officer ([copy@sfu.ca](mailto:copy@sfu.ca)) for assistance.*

See the [Basic FAQs](#) and [FAQs for Staff](#) for more copyright information.  
Contact the Copyright Office with any questions.

[copyright.sfu.ca](http://copyright.sfu.ca)  
[copy@sfu.ca](mailto:copy@sfu.ca)

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## Can I post this?

If you want to post material you find on the web without a “share” link, something you’re not sure was posted legitimately or material you find elsewhere (online or offline), follow the steps below.

- 1** Is the material protected by copyright? (Material not protected by copyright includes material in the public domain and material lacking in creativity or originality such as data and facts. Our [Basic FAQs](#) can help you.)  
**Yes** (go to next question)  
**No** (post the material)
- 2** Did you take the photo/create the image/write the document or does SFU hold the copyright (e.g. photos from Creative Services’ image library or text from the academic calendar)?  
**Yes** (post the material, complying with any requirements)  
**No** (go to next question)
- 3** Is the material licensed for this type of use (e.g. [Creative Commons](#) or [Open Access](#))?  
**Yes** (post the material, complying with license requirements, with attribution and link if possible)  
**No** (go to next question)
- 4** Is there a licensing agreement or statement specifically *disallowing* this use (e.g. website terms of use, “private use only” statement)?  
**Yes** (go to “If you are unable to use this material...”)  
**No** (go to next question)
- 5** Do you know who created it? Can you contact the creator for permission to post it?  
**Yes** (contact the creator, then post the material with attribution if you receive permission)  
**No** (go to “If you are unable to use this material...”)

## If you are unable to use this material, you could

- remove the work,
- adapt the material, repurpose the data in your own way or paraphrase (with attribution),
- take your own photo or create your own graphic,
- provide a link to the work instead (from a legitimate source), or
- use a different work (try to find a public domain, [Open Access](#) or [Creative Commons](#) work).

See the [Basic FAQs](#) and [FAQs for Staff](#) for more copyright information.  
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