However, if you publish in the 'traditional way' you normally lose all claims to the copyright of your work – you do this when you sign the Copyright Transfer Agreement.

Copyright Transfer Agreements will vary from publisher to publisher, usually they transfer exclusive rights of reproduction, public performance, public display, and modification of the original work to the publisher. In addition, this means that the publisher, as the copyright holder, has exclusive rights concerning use of the work, e.g. distribution, access, pricing and updates. Once the transfer agreement has been signed, the author must ask permission unless the use is one of the statutory exemptions in copyright law. In some cases the author may not be able to use their own article/work in course packs or other teaching, use sections such as tables and figures in conference papers or deposit the work in an archive, Repository or web site.

An alternative to the Copyright Transfer Agreement is the Licence to Publish, which allows the author to retain copyright and other rights that may help to increase the dissemination and impact of the work. Licence to Publish agreements use Creative Commons as an alternative to the transfer of copyright.

Creative Commons (CC) licenses allow the author, as a creator of content, to be very clear about what users may and may not do with their work. The six licenses are flexible enough to say exactly what is and is not allowed.

It is important to be very clear that CC licences are not an alternative to copyright. They are in fact built on copyright and last as long as applicable copyright lasts. They enable an author to modify copyright terms to best suit their needs. They ensure that authors get the credit for their work they deserve.

You will also retain all the moral rights to your work under a CC licence.

Many concerns about Creative Commons licensing have arisen from the findings of the Finch Report and the subsequent RCUK policy. These have been expressed in public evidence given by researchers, learned societies and publishers to enquiries in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Unfortunately some concerns have come from a misunderstanding of the CC licenses themselves, while others are not about what is permitted by the CC licence but rather what happens when content is suddenly made available on a worldwide scale. Is summary the benefits of using a CC licence include:

- The author owns the copyright.
- The six licenses are flexible enough to say exactly what is and is not allowed.
- They enable an author to modify copyright terms to best suit their needs.
- They ensure that authors get the credit for their work.they deserve.
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