

## Intellectual Property Policy

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### 1. Introduction and Purpose

Leigh UTC Dartford is committed to fostering a culture of creativity, innovation, scholarship and professional excellence. Intellectual Property (IP) created within the school community represents both an educational asset and a contributor to the reputation of the Trust. This policy sets out the principles governing the creation, ownership, use, protection and commercialisation of IP generated by staff, students and collaborators.

The purposes of this policy are to:

- define ownership of IP created in the course of employment, study or collaboration;
- ensure compliance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (CDPA), UK GDPR and other relevant legislation;
- safeguard the school's reputation, identity and proprietary materials;
- provide clarity on the appropriate use of school resources in creating IP;
- establish procedures for disclosure, review and commercialisation of IP; and
- resolve questions or disputes relating to IP ownership and use.

**Scope:** This policy applies to all staff (teaching, support and temporary), students, contractors, visitors, volunteers and any external partners working with the school. Where specific contractual or funding agreements supersede aspects of this policy, those agreements will take precedence.

## **2. Definitions**

For the purpose of this policy:

Intellectual Property (IP) refers to rights arising from creative or scholarly works, including copyright, patents, trademarks, design rights, trade secrets, software, databases and know-how.

Creator/Author refers to the individual(s) who originate the IP.

Institutional Works are works created by employees in the course of their employment or using significant school resources. Examples include curriculum materials, assessments, administrative documents, school-branded resources, websites, marketing materials and software developed for school use.

Scholarly/Academic Works include academic publications, research papers, lecture notes, personal research material, artistic works and other outputs created primarily for academic or professional purposes and not specific to Leigh UTC Dartford.

Externally Sponsored Works are works produced under grants, contracts or formal partnerships with external organisations.

School Resources include school premises, equipment, digital systems, specialised facilities, funding, paid staff time, proprietary data or confidential information.

## **3. IP Ownership**

### **3.1 School-Owned IP**

Leigh UTC Dartford (or the wider Trust, where applicable) will normally own IP in the following circumstances:

- Institutional Works created by staff in the course of their employment, including teaching materials developed specifically for the school, assessments, documentation, digital learning resources, software and video content.
- Externally Sponsored Works where a contract or grant specifies that the school shall own or share in the resulting IP.
- Works Created Using Significant School Resources, including specialised laboratories, funded research projects, technical support, or extensive use of school-specific data or systems.

Ownership includes the right to reproduce, modify, license, adapt and distribute such works.

### **3.2 Creator-Owned IP (Scholarly Exception)**

Leigh UTC Dartford recognises a scholarly exception that allows staff and students to retain ownership of Scholarly/Academic Works they create, provided these works:

- are not developed as part of contractual duties;
- are not specific to the school's curriculum, branding or operations; and
- do not make significant use of school resources beyond incidental access.

This typically includes academic publications, research papers, books, personal teaching notes, artistic work, portfolio creations and independent software tools.

### **3.3 Student IP**

Students ordinarily own IP that they create as part of their studies, except where:

- the work forms part of a school-sponsored project, placement or research initiative;

- an external partner agreement specifies otherwise; or
- the work uses significant or proprietary school resources.

Students participating in externally supported projects will be informed of any alternative ownership arrangements before the work begins.

#### **4. Use of School Resources**

Staff and students may make incidental use of general school resources (e.g., standard computers, library services, photocopying, routine software) for creating personal or scholarly works.

Use will be considered significant—and may therefore create school ownership—when it involves:

- specialised laboratories or equipment;
- substantial financial support or allocated staff time;
- paid research assistance;
- proprietary school datasets or confidential information;
- dedicated IT development or hosting services.

Creators must seek approval before initiating any project that may involve significant resources.

#### **5. Copyright, Fair Use and Legal Compliance**

All members of the school community must comply with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (CDPA), the Licensing Act, and all relevant UK guidance on the use of third-party materials.

Staff must ensure that teaching resources (including videos, extracts, images and digital media) meet Fair Dealing requirements and are used in accordance with licensing agreements such as CLA, ERA or relevant digital subscriptions.

Materials published on the school's Learning Management System, the school website, social media or public online platforms must respect copyright, licensing conditions and accessibility expectations.

The creation or use of IP must comply with the **Data Protection Act 2018** and **UK GDPR**, particularly regarding the handling, storage and sharing of personal or sensitive information.

#### **6. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

AI tools may assist in creating materials, but the following principles apply:

- Confidential or personal data must not be entered into public AI systems unless specifically approved and compliant with GDPR.
- Staff are responsible for verifying accuracy, originality and copyright status of AI-generated outputs.
- IP created solely by AI does not attract copyright under UK law; however, human-authored adaptations or selections may.

- AI-assisted materials created within the scope of employment are treated as Institutional Works unless otherwise agreed.

The school may issue additional operational guidance as AI tools evolve.

## **7. Licensing and Commercialisation**

Creators must disclose any potentially commercialisable IP produced in the course of employment or using significant school resources. Disclosures should be submitted to the Intellectual Property Committee or designated senior leader.

The school may:

- support protection of IP through registration;
- negotiate licences, partnerships or commercial use;
- share revenue where appropriate.

Where school-owned IP is commercialised, a revenue-sharing model will be published outlining the proportion of income allocated to the creator(s), the school and the Trust.

Creators are prohibited from independently licensing or commercialising school-owned materials without express written approval.

## **8. Trademarks and Brand Identity**

Leigh UTC Dartford retains exclusive ownership of all trademarks, service marks, logos, branding assets, mottoes and visual identity material.

Staff, students and external parties may not reproduce or use these marks for any purpose, commercial or otherwise, without prior written approval from the Principal or designated authority.

## **9. Policy Administration and Review**

An Intellectual Property Committee (or designated senior leader) will:

- interpret and oversee the policy;
- review disclosures;
- advise on ownership questions;
- recommend commercialisation approaches;
- support conflict resolution.

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if required by legislative or organisational changes.

## **10. Policy Violations and Dispute Resolution**

Concerns regarding unauthorised use, infringement or misappropriation of IP should be reported to the Principal.

Potential breaches will be investigated in line with HR, student behaviour and safeguarding procedures. Consequences may include:

- withdrawal of materials;

- mandatory training;
- disciplinary action under staff or student conduct policies;
- referral to external authorities where legally required.

Disputes about ownership or interpretation of this policy will be resolved initially through discussion with the IP Committee, and escalated to the Head of School or Trust leadership if necessary.