



Types of Intellectual Property: Copyright

Copyright is an unregistered right and comes into effect immediately, as soon as something is created and fixed in some way – for example, drawn or printed on paper, recorded on film, recorded as sound on tape, or formatted as an electronic file for the Internet. There is no official registration or fee. It is a good idea to mark your copyright work with the copyright symbol © followed by your name and the date, to warn others against copying it. But copyright exists whether you do this or not.

Copyright material is usually the result of creative skill and/or significant labour and/or investment, and without protection it would be easy for others to exploit material without paying the creator. Copyright-protected material includes original literary works, music, art, works of architecture, dance, drama, film, television, videos and broadcast, cable programmes and internet files. If this material was not protected, others would be able to exploit it without paying the creator. Most uses of copyright material require permission from the copyright owner.

Students can create material that may be protected by copyright, such as original essays, coursework, web pages, artistic material, and even videos and sound recordings. Novel and inventive ideas for new gadgets produced by students may also be suitable for protection by patent. However, if the new technology has already been disclosed (i.e. seen by others in the lesson), it may mean potential for being granted a patent is limited.

source: The Intellectual Property Office

This information sheet is one of a series compiled to help students and graduates that are interested in enterprise and innovation. The series is available from our website below.

Need more help?

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