

Intellectual Property

Quick guide to Intellectual Property for students at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington



Intellectual Property (IP) refers to “creations of the mind” – these are things like inventions, designs, and literary and artistic works



Copyright is the IP most relevant to students.

- It protects original creative works (e.g., writing, software, art).
 - It's automatically applied upon creation.
 - Students usually own the copyright in their thesis or dissertation.
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Other types of IP require registration and include:

- Trademarks – protect brand identifiers.
 - Patents – protect inventions.
 - Registered Designs – protect product appearance.
 - Trade Secrets – protect confidential business information.
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New IP can be created by the student (e.g., analysis, conclusions, presentation).

Existing IP can be used by students and includes general knowledge, previous work, and third-party materials. Use requires permission, especially for Indigenous IP like mātauranga Māori.

Students usually **own IP** created during their studies but there are exceptions that include:

- Third-party ownership
- Mātauranga Māori
- University ownership



IP ownership can be **transferred** via written agreement.

Licensing grants permission to use IP under specific terms without transferring ownership.

IP agreements are usually required when you are:

- Participating in WIL or funded projects.
- Using or creating IP with commercial potential.
- Collaborating with industry partners or supervisors.
- Agreements clarify ownership, allow publication (with possible embargo), and ensure proper IP protection.



IP Management Plans can help ensure you protect your IP and respect that of others.

See the [Introduction to Intellectual Property](#) for more information and FAQs