



User-based Licensing

Version 1.0

Migration Guide

Non-Confidential

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User-based Licensing Migration Guide

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The product version is 1.0.

See also: [Proprietary notice](#) | [Product and document information](#) | [Useful resources](#)

Start reading

If you prefer, you can skip to [the start of the content](#).

Intended audience

This document is intended for Arm development tool license administrators that are moving from node-locked or floating licensing to user-based licensing.

Inclusive language commitment

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1. User-based licensing migration overview

User-based licensing replaces the previous Arm licensing models: node-locked and floating. The UBL licensing model is different from the previous models, and you will not be able to use many of the licensing processes you used with the old licensing technology. Although your user base and license usage is unique, this guide aims to make your license management and usage as simple as possible by providing guidance on using the new licensing model for various use-cases.

User-based licensing overview

You can significantly reduce, or eliminate entirely, server redundancy measures when you use user-based licensing licenses. License checkout periods are 7 days and you can use them offline.

For *Continuous Integration* (CI), you only require licenses for the number of users you have. For example, if your CI process executes under a single Jenkins user account, then you need just one license.

User-based licensing supports cloud-hosted development. You can choose to host your licenses on the Arm Cloud License Server or manage your own license server.

Reasons for change

For many years, Arm development tools and models have been provided with either Node-Locked or Floating licenses. However, it is time to make a change. Increasing use of cloud-hosted development environments, increasing popularity of modern development flows such as Continuous Integration, increasing power of servers, and the rise in remote working, mean that Node-Locked or Floating licenses are starting to introduce friction.

Therefore, we are migrating to User-based Licensing. User-based Licensing reduces licensing friction on Arm development tools to help you leverage modern technology and development practices. Saving engineering hours and improving performance, user based licensing helps drive success for developers.

Key differences

The key differences between the new and old license models are shown in the following table.

Table 1-1: Differences in licensing types

License usage	User-based licensing	Floating license	Node-locked license
Devices allowed to use single license	A single user can use the same license on as many devices as required, with as many Arm development tools as licensed. For example, a CI user could use one license on a hundred devices running simultaneous tests.	Multiple devices and Arm development tools, limited by the number of licenses available on the local license server.	Licensed Arm development tools for a static IP address on a single device.

License usage	User-based licensing	Floating license	Node-locked license
License reuse	<p>A license is locked to a user for at least 7 days after product activation or last use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For a local license server, the license is released when it has not been renewed for 7 days. For an activation code from the Arm Cloud License Server, the administrator must revoke the activation code. The license cannot be renewed and is then released when it has not been renewed for 7 days. 	<p>A license is only locked to a user when an Arm development tool is in use. After the tool is shut down, the floating license is immediately available for other users.</p>	<p>Any user can use the license on the device.</p>
User network access	<p>Usually one access every 24 hours for each device, to renew the license. If access fails, the license stays active for up to 7 days without network access.</p>	<p>Network access to a local license server every time an Arm development tool starts and shuts down, to take and release the license.</p>	<p>No access required.</p>
User requirement to access intranet or internet	<p>Requires access to the internet or your intranet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For a local license server, intranet access to the license server. For an activation code from the Arm Cloud License Server, internet access to the Arm license server for product activation and license renewal. 	<p>Intranet access to the local license server required.</p>	<p>No access required.</p>
Server redundancy	<p>Not required as all licenses can be used offline for 7 days or longer.</p>	<p>Three servers are used to ensure licenses are always available. If one server goes down, the other servers can still issue licenses.</p>	<p>Not required as the license is permanent for a device.</p>

1.1 License administrator requirements

Describes the requirements for the user-based licensing license administrator.

The user-based licensing administrator must have:

- An account on the Arm user-based licensing portal on <https://developer.arm.com/support/licensing/user-based>.
- The account must have one or more Arm products with associated licenses.
- If using a local license server, the server must be installed on a Linux host. For more details see [Hardware and software requirements](#).

Related information

[Add a product and licenses](#)

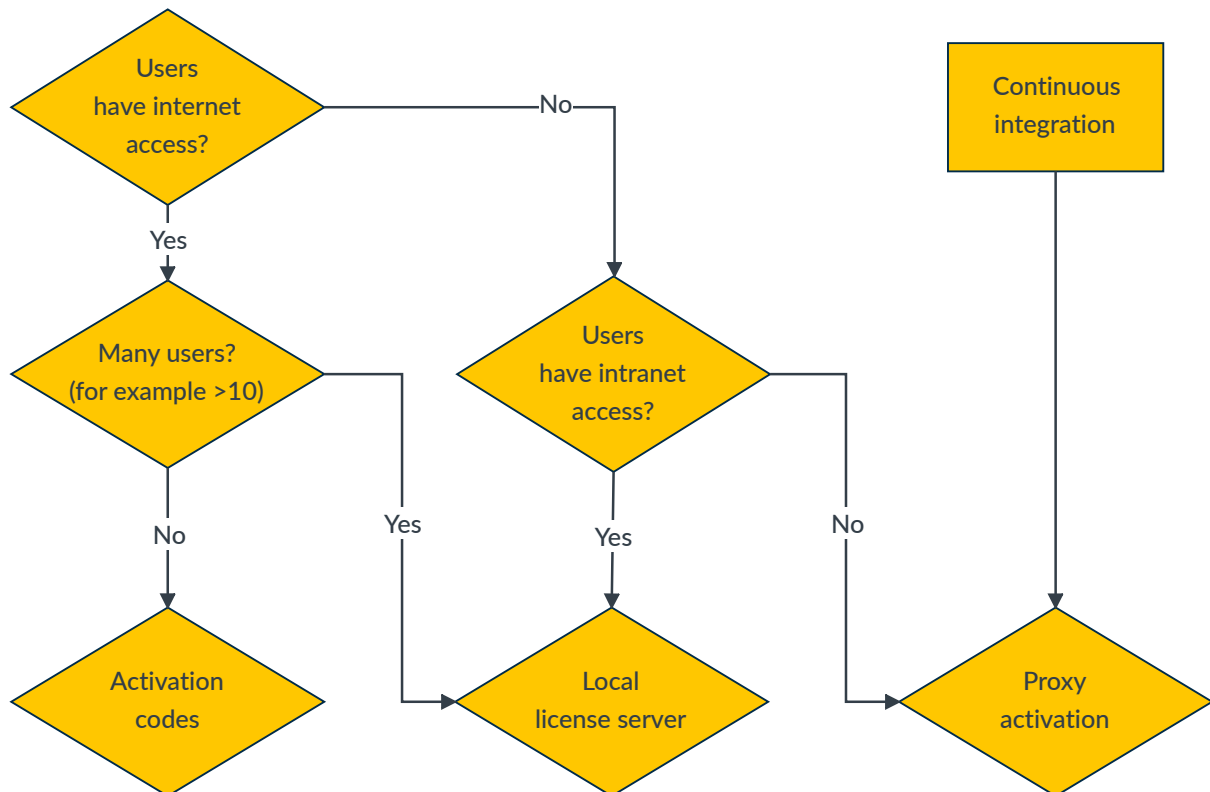
[Video tutorial: Accessing the Arm License Portal](#)

2. User-based licensing scenarios

Your licensing situation is unique to your environment. The scenarios in this section describe Arm recommendations for user-based licensing set up with different use-cases.

The following flow chart provides a simplified overview to help you select your licensing outcomes.

Figure 2-1: Licensing scenarios and outcomes



Note

- Activation codes are individually managed. If you have many users (for example, 10 or more) using activation codes, this could involve a lot of license management administration. Therefore, Arm recommends using a local license server for many users on one site.
- Proxy activation involves creating a user license activation file on one device and then using that file to provide licenses for the user on one or many other devices.

For more information on the licensing scenarios see:

- [Licensing scenario: Activation codes](#)
- [Licensing scenario: Local license server](#)

- [Licensing scenario: Users on multiple sites](#)
- [Licensing scenario: Special users](#)

For more information on the different types of user-based licensing see:

- [Installing and populating the license server](#)
- [Activation code administration](#)
- [Proxy activation](#)

2.1 Licensing scenario: Activation codes

If you have fewer than 10 Arm development tool users with access to the internet, Arm recommends using activation codes.

When using activation codes, as an administrator, you will:

1. Log into your account on the Arm user-based licensing portal.
2. Generate an activation code for each user.
3. Pass an activation code to each user.

For more details see:

- [Activation code administration](#).
- [Video tutorial: Activation code management and usage](#) (1:39 minutes).



Note

Activation codes do not work effectively in a scenario where you have fewer licenses than you have users. When an activation code is first used, it is locked to the user. The only way to give the license to another user is to revoke the license, wait for the license to become available again (usually 7 days after the license was last used), and then create a new activation code.

If you have users who only occasionally use Arm development tools, you could use a license server. The license automatically becomes available 7 days after the license server license was last used. For an overview of license server administration, see [Licensing scenario: Local license server](#).

User requirements

Users need internet access to activate products and renew product licenses. Although internet access does not need to be constant, a user license expires if the user cannot access the Arm URLs on the internet for 7 consecutive days.

If your users have no access or limited access to the internet, you could use one of the following licensing strategies:

- Use a license server to provide licenses across your intranet. For an overview of the requirements see [Licensing scenario: Local license server](#).
- License a user on a device that has access to the internet and then make that license available on the user device. For more details see:
 - [Proxy activation](#). Proxy activation also allows you to extend the time a user can be offline for up to 365 days.
 - [Activate a license on multiple devices](#) for details of how to copy the license cache of a licensed product onto another device.

2.2 Licensing scenario: Local license server

Arm recommends using a user-based licensing license server when you have one of the following licensing scenarios:

- You have more than 10 Arm development tool users on a site.
- Users do not have regular access to the Internet.
- You have users that only require occasional use of the Arm development tools. If a license is not used for 7 days, it automatically becomes available for other users.

As an administrator, you will:

1. Create a user-based licensing license server on a secure device that can be accessed by users on your intranet. Users will require access to the license server IP address and a single port.
2. Populate the server with licenses for the required Arm products:
 - a. Create an identity file using the license server.
 - b. Log into your account on the Arm user-based licensing portal and use the identity file to register your license server.
 - c. On the portal, allocate licenses to the server and then download a license file.
 - d. Allocate licenses to the license server by importing the license file.
3. Give the license server URL, including the license server port, to users.

For more details see:

- [Installing and populating the license server](#)
- [Video tutorial: Local license server installation and configuration](#) (2:23 minutes)
- [Video tutorial: Local license server user setup](#) (1:34 minutes)

User requirements

Users need intranet access to activate products and renew product licenses. Although intranet access does not need to be constant, a user license expires if the user cannot access the license server for 7 consecutive days.

If your users have zero or limited access to your intranet, you could license a user on a device that has access to the internet and then make the license available on the user device. For more details see: * [Proxy activation](#). Proxy activation also allows you to extend the time a user can be offline for up to 365 days. * [Activate a license on multiple devices](#) for details of how to copy the license cache of a licensed product onto another device.

2.3 Licensing scenario: Users on multiple sites

You might be responsible for providing Arm user-based licensing to users across multiple sites for your company.

In this case, Arm recommends that you use a hybrid approach on a site-by-site basis:

- For any site that has fewer than 10 users with access to the internet, use activation codes. For more information see [Licensing scenario: Activation codes](#).
- For any site that has 10 or more users or users that do not have access to the internet, use a license server. For more information see [Licensing scenario: Local license server](#).
- For users that do not have access to the internet or intranet, use [Proxy activation](#).

2.4 Licensing scenario: Special users

Some Arm development tool users have different licensing requirements from your general users.

CI user

Continuous integration (CI) can test software on many devices, often using the same user. User-based licensing is ideal for this type of use-case, as the same user can be licensed on multiple devices and the licenses are not locked to a single device.

In this scenario, user-based licensing requires all devices to access the network once every 24 hours to renew licenses. If this happens at the same time every day, this can cause a lot of network traffic. If network traffic is an issue, consider using one of the following licensing methods to renew a license on a single device and then pass the active license to many other devices:

- [Proxy activation](#). Proxy activation, by default, stops all licensing network requests and also allows you to extend the time a user can be offline for up to 365 days.
- Copy the license cache of a licensed product onto another device. For more information see [Activate a license on multiple devices](#).

Priority users

In your organization, you might have:

- Priority users, that must always have access to Arm development tools
- Occasional users, that only need occasional access to the tools

In this case:

- For priority users do one following:
 - Give each user an activation code.
 - Use a license server that is only used by priority users. The license server would be configured to have:
 - A number of licenses that is the same, or greater, than the number of priority users.
 - A user access control list that includes the priority users, and excludes all other users.
- For occasional users, use a license server that is not used by the priority users. There can be fewer licenses allocated to this server than the number of occasional users. If all licenses are taken, users will have to wait for a license to become free.

The license server should be configured with user access control list that excludes the priority users. If priority users start using this URL they can be times where this license server is unable to provide a license for the priority user.



When a user takes a user-based licensing license, that license is locked to the user for a minimum of 7 days. The license is only released for other users after 7 days have passed since the license was last used.

For details of user access lists see [Create an access control list](#).

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Product and document information

Read the information in these sections to understand the release status of the product and documentation, and the conventions used in Arm documents.

Product status

All products and services provided by Arm require deliverables to be prepared and made available at different levels of completeness. The information in this document indicates the appropriate level of completeness for the associated deliverables.

Product completeness status

The information in this document is Final, that is for a developed product.

Revision history

These sections can help you understand how the document has changed over time.

Document release information

The Document history table gives the issue number and the released date for each released issue of this document.

Document history

Issue	Date	Confidentiality	Change
1.0-04	30 April 2025	Non-Confidential	Documentation update 4 for v1.0
1.0-03	30 November 2024	Non-Confidential	Documentation update 3 for v1.0
1.0-02	30 September 2024	Non-Confidential	Documentation update 2 for v1.0
1.0-01	31 July 2024	Non-Confidential	Documentation update 1 for v1.0
1.0-00	15 April 2024	Non-Confidential	New document for v1.0

Change history

This is the first release of the document.

Conventions

The following subsections describe conventions used in Arm documents.

Glossary

The Arm Glossary is a list of terms used in Arm documentation, together with definitions for those terms. The Arm Glossary does not contain terms that are industry standard unless the Arm meaning differs from the generally accepted meaning.

See the Arm Glossary for more information: developer.arm.com/glossary.

Typographic conventions

Arm documentation uses typographical conventions to convey specific meaning.

Convention	Use
<i>italic</i>	Citations.
bold	Interface elements, such as menu names. Terms in descriptive lists, where appropriate.
monospace	Text that you can enter at the keyboard, such as commands, file and program names, and source code.
monospace <u>underline</u>	A permitted abbreviation for a command or option. You can enter the underlined text instead of the full command or option name.
<and>	Encloses replaceable terms for assembler syntax where they appear in code or code fragments. For example: <div>MRC p15, 0, <Rd>, <CRn>, <CRm>, <Opcode_2></div>
SMALL CAPITALS	Terms that have specific technical meanings as defined in the <i>Arm® Glossary</i> . For example, IMPLEMENTATION DEFINED , IMPLEMENTATION SPECIFIC , UNKNOWN , and UNPREDICTABLE .



We recommend the following. If you do not follow these recommendations your system might not work.



Your system requires the following. If you do not follow these requirements your system will not work.



You are at risk of causing permanent damage to your system or your equipment, or harming yourself.



This information is important and needs your attention.



A useful tip that might make it easier, better or faster to perform a task.



A reminder of something important that relates to the information you are reading.

Useful resources

This document contains information that is specific to this product. See the following resources for other useful information.

Access to Arm documents depends on their confidentiality:

- Non-Confidential documents are available at developer.arm.com/documentation. Each document link in the following tables goes to the online version of the document.
- Confidential documents are available to licensees only through the product package.

Arm product resources	Document ID	Confidentiality
User-based Licensing at Arm Developer	-	Non-Confidential
User-based Licensing Administration Guide	107573	Non-Confidential
User-based Licensing User Guide	102516	Non-Confidential
User-based Licensing: Access control lists video tutorial	-	Non-Confidential
User-based Licensing: Accessing the Arm License Portal video tutorial	-	Non-Confidential
User-based Licensing: Cloud-based Licenses and Activation Codes video tutorial	-	Non-Confidential
User-based Licensing: Enabling Legacy Editions of Keil MDK video tutorial	-	Non-Confidential
User-based Licensing: End-user Setup video tutorial	-	Non-Confidential
User-based Licensing: Local License Server Setup video tutorial	-	Non-Confidential
User-based Licensing: Proxy Activation and Borrow Period	-	Non-Confidential
User-based Licensing: Removal of Licenses and Decommissioning Server video tutorial	-	Non-Confidential