



SchoolMessenger®

Blog Guide

Contents

- Introduction..... 3**
 - Blogs and Security: Something to Consider 3
- Adding a Blog Page..... 4**
- Blog Administration 5**
 - Edit 5
 - Posts 6
 - Creating a New Post 6
 - Uploading Your Podcast 7
 - Managing Posts 7
 - Editing a Post 8
 - Managing Comments 9
 - Post Categories 9
- Blog Configuration..... 10**
 - Settings 11
 - Moderation 11
 - Subscription 12
 - Blog Sidebar..... 12
 - Licensing 12
 - Security 13
- View Blog 13**

Introduction

Over the years, blogs have risen in popularity. By offering a robust communication method to exchange stories, news, opinion, and more. Blogs enable users to engage and receive feedback from an audience. There are a number of ways to utilize SchoolMessenger Presence's Blogs for an educational setting. They include:

- **District-to-Community Communication:** Faculty and Administrators can create blog pages to discuss school, or class, related activities with the community.
- **Internal Discussions:** Teachers can set up blogs to carry out internal discussions with colleagues and students.
- **Student Blogs:** Students can participate in moderated blogs to discuss activities and class related projects.
- **Event Blogs:** School committees can set up blogs to discuss past or upcoming events.

This guide will take you through the process of creating a blog, managing the database, and exploring some of the handier options available.

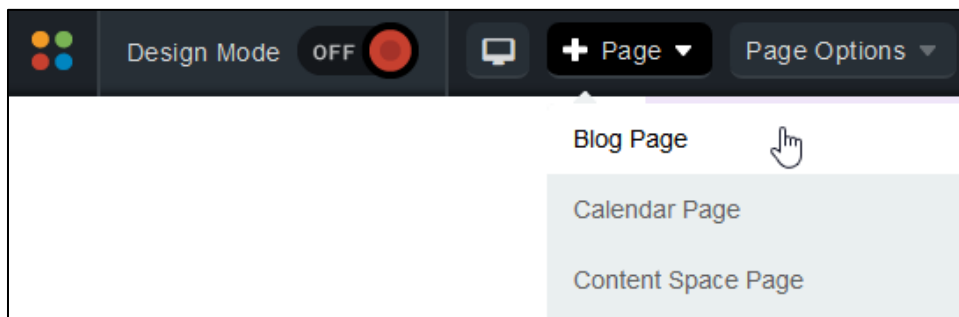
Blogs and Security: Something to Consider

Presence's blogs offer a safe and easy way for teachers and students to communicate with each other and the community. As such, understanding a blog's security protocols is a necessary step in getting the most out of the module. The most prevalent challenge for this kind of social medium is ensuring content is appropriate, filtered, and tracked.

By offering the tools teachers and administrators need to guarantee student safety, Presence's blogging module facilitates constructive communication. Some of the most important security tools include user-based authentication, comment approvals, and the ability to filter comments by IP address. This manual will take you through each of these tools, serving as a valuable resource for blog authors to familiarize themselves with the security features.

Adding a Blog Page

Select the page you would like to connect the **Blog Page** to (this will be the Parent Page). Hover over **Page** on the **Administrative Toolbar** and select **Blog Page**.



The loaded page will prompt you for a **Title**. This will be the name displayed as a link on the **Parent Page**. In addition, you will be prompted to generate a **Name**. This will be the name generated for the web address. After providing a **Name**, there are several options you are presented with:

- **Blog:** From here, you can select whether to create a new blog or link this blog to an existing one. When linking to an existing blog you will not be able to add posts until the administrator of that blog gives you authoring permissions.
- **Option:** This section gives you the ability to decide whether the blog opens in a new window or an existing one.

A screenshot of the 'ADD BLOG PAGE' form. The form has a title bar that says 'ADD BLOG PAGE'. Below the title bar are two input fields: 'Title' and 'Name'. The 'Title' field has a blue downward arrow icon on its right side. Below the input fields are two sections: 'Blog' and 'Option'. The 'Blog' section has two radio buttons: 'Create a New Blog' (which is selected) and 'Link to an Existing Blog'. The 'Option' section has two radio buttons: 'Open the external link page in existing window' (which is selected) and 'Open the external link page in a new window'. Below these radio buttons is a checkbox labeled 'Replace my profile blog link with this blog'. At the bottom right of the form are two buttons: 'Create Page' and 'Cancel'.

Next you will be brought to the **Blog Dashboard** which has 7 main areas:

Title Area: This area is the central focus/description of your blog.

Recent Posts Preview: This area displays the most recent blog posts and a small preview of the blog's content.





Blog Administration: This section is visible only to the administrators of the blog. We will be returning to this area in the following section of this guide.

Recent Post Headlines: Provides links to recent blog posts.

Archives: A collection of previous blog entries sorted by date.

Group Blogs: An area dedicated to displaying other blogs grouped with yours.

Content Alert Subscription: Allows users to subscribe to RSS feeds from your blog.

<div> MATH BLOG <p>The Math blog is designed to update students on any helpful news and information for their Mathematics courses.</p> </div> <div> RECENT POSTS <p>Handy Strategies for Studying Mathematics</p> <p>Hey everyone, It's Mr. Danner here with some handy tips for you to remember when you are working on your math assignments this weekend.</p> <p>Posted by Charlie Danner at 1:49 PM</p> </div>	<div> BLOG ADMINISTRATION <p>Blog Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Posts, 1 Draft <p> New Post</p> <p> Blog Administration</p> </div> <div> RECENT POSTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handy Strategies for Studying Mathematics </div> <div> ARCHIVES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 2014 (1) </div> <div> GROUP BLOGS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A History of Greatness • English Department Blog • English Department Blog (1) • English Department Blog (2) <p>More...</p> </div> <div> CONTENT ALERT SUBSCRIPTION <p> Blog Feeds  Podcast Feeds</p> </div>
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Blog Administration

The **Blog Administration** field is reserved for back-end functionality. This section of the module is divided into 6 main components:

- **Edit:** This is where you can change the name of blog.
- **Posts:** Create, edit, search, and view posts.
- **Comments:** View user comments with the ability to filter, search and remove anything you deem, or has been flagged as, inappropriate
- **Post Categories:** Used to mark the category each blog post falls into for sorting and separation.
- **Configuration:** This section handles blog security, permissions, podcast licensing, and other configuration items specific to the blog.
- **View Blog:** Provides a completed overview of the blog.
- **Subscribers:** Allows you to view and remove subscribers to the blog.

Edit

The **Edit** Blog tab allows you to rename the blog, include a description, or change the blog's template.

BLOG DETAILS

Blog Name

A History of Greatness

B

I

U

Description

Theme

Group Blog

Update

Cancel

Posts

There are two important ways you can add a post to a blog; through the sidebar of a blog and from the **Blog Administration** interface.

Creating a New Post

On the Blog Administration interface of the blog page, click **Add Post**.

Edit

Posts

Comments

Post Categories

Configuration

View Blog

Subscribers

VIEW POSTS

Search

View All

POSTS (1-20 OF 21)

ADD POST

Title	Category	Date	Publish Status	Comment Status	Actions
100 Years of RRSL Fest		6/6/2017	Published	Open	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

You can also create a new post while viewing a blog by clicking **New Post** in the blog sidebar.

Both options will take you to the editing interface of the blog, which is divided into two areas: **Create a New Post** and **Uploading Your Podcast**.

Fill out details for the blog post. These include the **Post Title** (this title will be displayed on the blog page), the **Category** (divide your posts by topic and they can be grouped together for easy viewing), and the **Tags** (assign key words to make blogs easier to find).

BLOG ADMINISTRATION

Blog Summary

• 18 Posts, 1 Draft

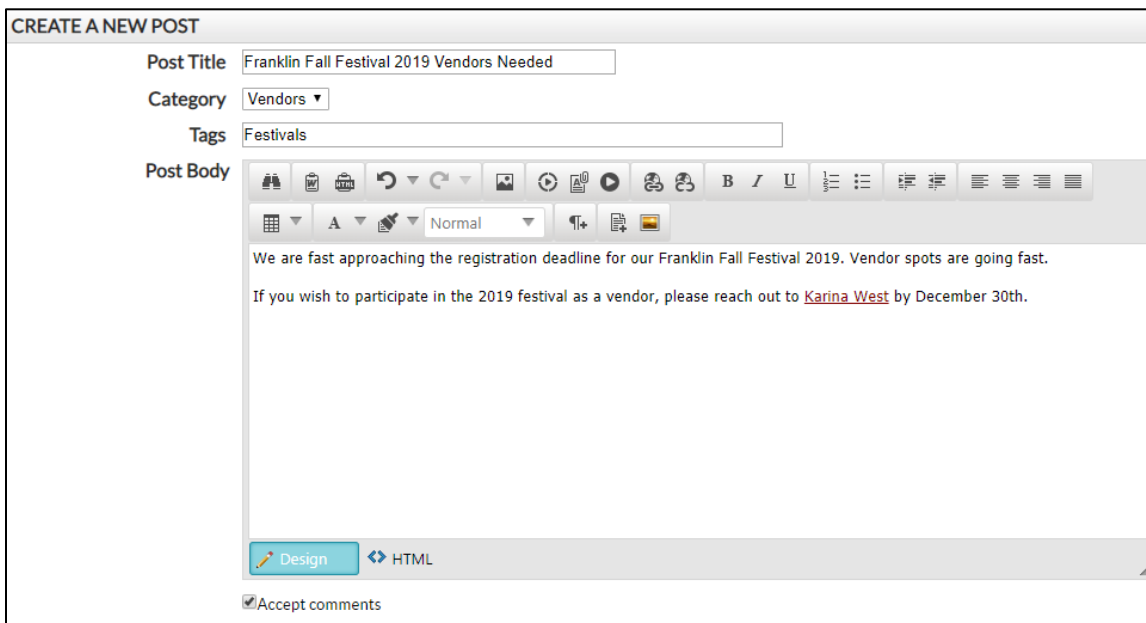
• 2 Comments, 1 Unapproved

New Post

Blog Administration

Next, fill out the **Post Body** section of the page. This section utilizes the same basic editor used for producing content on other parts of the site. For a detailed explanation of the buttons in the editor, please refer to the *Text Editor* guide.

The **Accept Comments** field determines whether you wish to enable visitors to publish comments to your post. Unchecking this box will prevent users from posting comments.



CREATE A NEW POST

Post Title

Category

Tags

Post Body

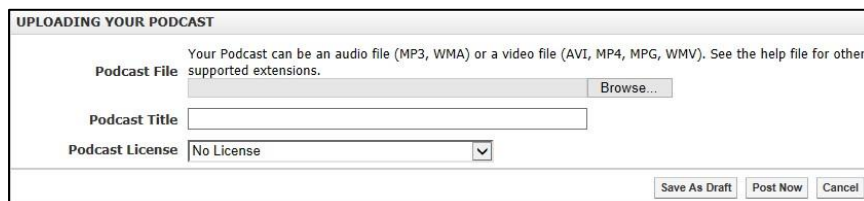
We are fast approaching the registration deadline for our Franklin Fall Festival 2019. Vendor spots are going fast.

If you wish to participate in the 2019 festival as a vendor, please reach out to [Karina West](#) by December 30th.

☒ Accept comments

Uploading Your Podcast

In addition to publishing **Blogs**, Presence's Blog module allows users to post podcasts. A podcast is an audio or video file made available for download or subscription through an RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed.



UPLOADING YOUR PODCAST

Your Podcast can be an audio file (MP3, WMA) or a video file (AVI, MP4, MPG, WMV). See the help file for other supported extensions.

Podcast File

Podcast Title



Podcast License

To upload a podcast:

Click **Browse** and select a file from your computer.

Enter the desired title for your podcast in the **Podcast Title** area, and it will be displayed in the blog menu. For copyright purposes, it is important to indicate the **Podcast License** of your media file.

Managing Posts

- **Viewing Posts:** To view a post that has been created (Either in draft form or published), click the  icon.
- **Deleting a Post:** To delete a post click the  icon.
- **Moderation:** Blog administrators can choose to set created posts to **Approved**, **Unapproved**, or **Rejected** status. Selecting **Approved** will change the **Publish Status** to **Published**, meaning that everyone will be able

to see the post in the blog. Selecting **Unapproved** will change the **Publish Status** to **Unapproved**, and the post will not be visible on the blog; instead, it will only be viewable by a blog administrator in the **Posts** tab. Choosing **Rejected** prompts the blog administrator to provide a reason for the post's rejection, and then displays the **Publish Status** as **Rejected**.

- **Comment Status:** Shows if the comment status is **Open** or **Closed**. An **Open** comment status indicates that the blog, or post, has comments enabled, while **Closed** indicates that commenting is disabled.
- **Publish Status:** Provides the blog administrator with the status of a post being **Published**, **Rejected** or **Unapproved**. For clarification on the **Publish Statuses**, please see their explanation above in the **Moderation** heading.
- **Date:** When the post was created.
- **Category:** Shows what category, if any, the author or administrator has designated to the blog or post.
- **Title:** The **Title** of the blog post that will appear on other pages.

Editing a Post

If you need to edit a post after you have published it, you can do so by clicking on the name of the post. When you are finished making your changes, click **Post Now** to publish the blog.

UPDATE POST

Post Title

Category

Tags

Post Body

We are fast approaching the registration deadline for our Franklin Fall Festival 2019. Vendor spots are going fast.

If you wish to participate in the 2019 festival as a vendor, please reach out to [Karina West](#) by December 15th.

☒ Accept comments

UPLOADING YOUR PODCAST

Your Podcast can be an audio file (MP3, WMA) or a video file (AVI, MP4, MPG, WMV). See the help file for other supported extensions.

Podcast File No file chosen

Podcast Title

Podcast License

Managing Comments

Administrators can moderate comments made on **Blogs**. This tool is vital for an education setting; ensuring all content is validated and approved prior to publication.

Edit	Posts	Comments	Post Categories	Configuration	View Blog	Subscribers
FILTER: All Comments Search View All						
COMMENTS (1-3 OF 3)						DELETE ALL
Comment	Post	Created On	Created By	IP Address	Approved	Action
Food for thought	RibFest 2017	27 November, 2016 03:03 PM	Bert.Tate	38.99.167.138	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Interesting!	100 Years of RRSL Fest	07 June, 2017 11:44 AM	Guest	75.78.103.21	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sounds neat!	100 Years of RRSL Fest	07 June, 2017 11:44 AM	Karina.West	75.78.103.8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

The **Filter** dropdown allows you to filter comments by status, such as:

- **All Comments:** This view displays all comments and is the default view of the Comments report.
- **Unapproved:** Displays comments that have yet to be approved.
- **Comment IP Address** – Allows for the search of comments by IP Address in order to find posts made from a particular computer.
- **Comment Date:** Shows only comments made on a particular date.

You can authorize a comment to become public by checking it off in the **Approve** column. You can also delete comments by clicking the icon in the **Action** column.

Post Categories

Utilizing topical categories is useful when publishing blogs, since they make it easier for readers to find posts with specific subjects.

To create a new category for your blog:

Type the name of the category in the **Category** field and click **Add**.

Categories can either be **Public** or **Private**. A **Public** category is usable by every blog and a **Private** category is only usable by the current blog.

A category can be deleted by clicking the icon in the **Action** column.

Edit	Posts	Comments	Post Categories	Configuration	View Blog	Subscribers
POST CATEGORY DETAILS						
Category <input type="text"/>						
Type <input checked="" type="radio"/> Public (Every blog can use this category) <input type="radio"/> Private (Only current blog can use this category)						
<input type="button" value="Add"/>						
POST CATEGORIES						
Category	Type	Action				
Festivals and Celebrations	<input type="radio"/> Public <input checked="" type="radio"/> Private					
Fun and Informative	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Public <input type="radio"/> Private					
Internal	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Public <input type="radio"/> Private					
Suggested Readings	<input type="radio"/> Public <input checked="" type="radio"/> Private					









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Categories can either be **Public** or **Private**. A **Public** category is usable by every blog and a **Private** category is only usable by the current blog.

A category can be deleted by clicking the  icon in the **Action** column.

Edit	Posts	Comments	Post Categories	Configuration	View Blog	Subscribers
POST CATEGORY DETAILS						
Category <input type="text"/>						
Type <input checked="" type="radio"/> Public (Every blog can use this category) <input type="radio"/> Private (Only current blog can use this category)						
<input type="button" value="Add"/>						
POST CATEGORIES						
Category			Type	Action		
	Festivals and Celebrations	<input type="radio"/> Public <input checked="" type="radio"/> Private				
	Fun and Informative	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Public <input type="radio"/> Private				
	Internal	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Public <input type="radio"/> Private				
	Suggested Readings	<input type="radio"/> Public <input checked="" type="radio"/> Private				

 **Note:** Deleting a category does not delete the posts tagged with it. Deleting blog posts can only be performed through the **Posts** tab in **Blog Administration**.

Blog Configuration

The **Configuration** tab contains all the housekeeping components for every element of the blog (such as RSS feeds, permissions, preferences, etc.) making it one of the most important parts of the **Blog Administration** console.

The **Configuration** tab is further broken into 6 main categories:

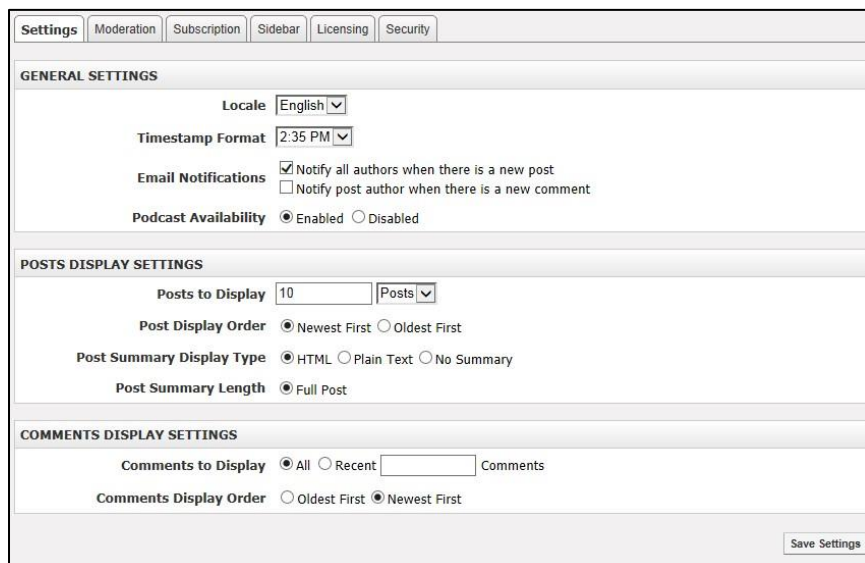
- Settings
- Moderation
- Subscription
- Sidebar
- Licensing
- Security

Settings

With the **Settings** tab, administrators have the ability to make simple changes to the blog.

This area is divided into 3 main sections:

- **General Settings:** Through here, **Email Notifications** can be switched on or off, the way time is displayed can be set in **Timestamp Format**, the **Locale** can be changed to **English** or **French**, and you can edit **Podcast Availability**.
- **Post Display Settings:** You can configure the display parameters of posts on your blog.
- **Comment Display Settings:** Controls the number of comments displayed at once, while the order of comments can be set to display **Oldest First** or **Newest First**.



The screenshot shows the 'Settings' tab selected. The interface is divided into three main sections:

- GENERAL SETTINGS:**
 - Locale:** English (dropdown menu)
 - Timestamp Format:** 2:35 PM (dropdown menu)
 - Email Notifications:**
 - ☒ Notify all authors when there is a new post
 - ☐ Notify post author when there is a new comment
 - Podcast Availability:** ☒ Enabled ☐ Disabled
- POSTS DISPLAY SETTINGS:**
 - Posts to Display:** 10 (input field) **Posts** (dropdown menu)
 - Post Display Order:** ☒ Newest First ☐ Oldest First
 - Post Summary Display Type:** ☒ HTML ☐ Plain Text ☐ No Summary
 - Post Summary Length:** ☒ Full Post
- COMMENTS DISPLAY SETTINGS:**
 - Comments to Display:** ☒ All ☐ Recent (input field) Comments
 - Comments Display Order:** ☐ Oldest First ☒ Newest First

A 'Save Settings' button is located at the bottom right of the form.

Moderation

The **Moderation** tab allows you to assign blog moderators, specify whether approval is required for a post, and change the options for **Comment Moderation** (who can comment on the blog and if approval is required).



The screenshot shows the 'Moderation' tab selected. The interface is divided into two main sections:

- POST MODERATION:**
 - Post Moderation:** ☒ No approval required ☐ Hold posts for approval
 - Moderator(s):** (input field with a user icon) (All moderators will be automatically granted full control to this blog. Please note that when you remove a moderator you may need to modify their privileges in the security section.)
- COMMENT MODERATION:**
 - Comment Availability:**
 - ☐ No one is allowed to comment
 - ☐ Only registered users may comment
 - ☒ All users may comment
 - Moderation:** ☒ No approval required ☐ Hold comments for approval

A 'Save Settings' button is located at the bottom right of the form.

Subscription

The **Subscription** tab allows for the activation, and deactivation, of **RSS feeds** and **Email Alerts**.



Settings Moderation **Subscription** Sidebar Licensing Security

SUBSCRIPTION SETTINGS


RSS Feeds ☒ On ☐ Off

Email Alerts ☐ On ☒ Off

Save Settings

Blog Sidebar

Allowing for total control of the blog's sidebar items, this section allows users to select each option they desire to display.



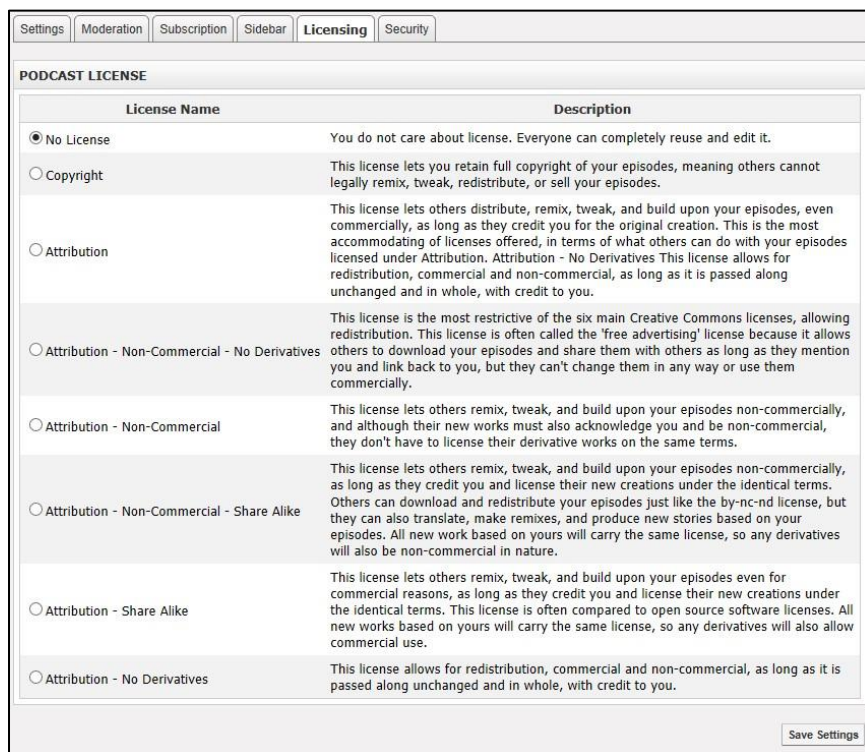
Settings Moderation Subscription **Sidebar** Licensing Security

SIDEBAR SETTINGS

Blog Name	Selected
Administration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Recent Posts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tags	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Archives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Group Blogs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Post Categories	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Content Alert Subscription	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Description	<input type="checkbox"/>

Licensing

The **Licensing** tab provides the definition of all the licensing options, control to select any of the desired licensing choices, as well as the option to assign a particular default license for all podcasts.



Settings Moderation Subscription Sidebar **Licensing** Security

PODCAST LICENSE

License Name	Description
<input checked="" type="radio"/> No License	You do not care about license. Everyone can completely reuse and edit it.
<input type="radio"/> Copyright	This license lets you retain full copyright of your episodes, meaning others cannot legally remix, tweak, redistribute, or sell your episodes.
<input type="radio"/> Attribution	This license lets others distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon your episodes, even commercially, as long as they credit you for the original creation. This is the most accommodating of licenses offered, in terms of what others can do with your episodes licensed under Attribution. Attribution - No Derivatives This license allows for redistribution, commercial and non-commercial, as long as it is passed along unchanged and in whole, with credit to you.
<input type="radio"/> Attribution - Non-Commercial - No Derivatives	This license is the most restrictive of the six main Creative Commons licenses, allowing redistribution. This license is often called the 'free advertising' license because it allows others to download your episodes and share them with others as long as they mention you and link back to you, but they can't change them in any way or use them commercially.
<input type="radio"/> Attribution - Non-Commercial	This license lets others remix, tweak, and build upon your episodes non-commercially, and although their new works must also acknowledge you and be non-commercial, they don't have to license their derivative works on the same terms.
<input type="radio"/> Attribution - Non-Commercial - Share Alike	This license lets others remix, tweak, and build upon your episodes non-commercially, as long as they credit you and license their new creations under the identical terms. Others can download and redistribute your episodes just like the by-nc-nd license, but they can also translate, make remixes, and produce new stories based on your episodes. All new work based on yours will carry the same license, so any derivatives will also be non-commercial in nature.
<input type="radio"/> Attribution - Share Alike	This license lets others remix, tweak, and build upon your episodes even for commercial reasons, as long as they credit you and license their new creations under the identical terms. This license is often compared to open source software licenses. All new works based on yours will carry the same license, so any derivatives will also allow commercial use.
<input type="radio"/> Attribution - No Derivatives	This license allows for redistribution, commercial and non-commercial, as long as it is passed along unchanged and in whole, with credit to you.

Save Settings

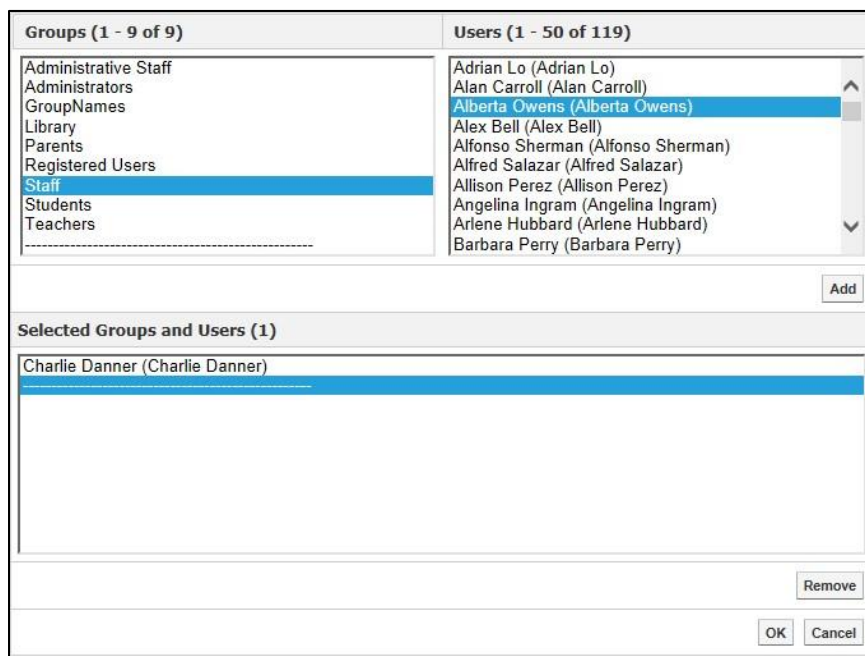
Security

The **Security** section of the blog is managed in the same manner as all other Presence modules. There are three essential user roles for **Blogs**:

- **Administrator:** Users with complete control of the blog.
- **Authors:** Users that can only co-author content for the blog.
- **Browsers:** Any User who can view, and comment, on the blog, but cannot create any new blog posts.

 **Important:** *You must include the Guest user if you wish the blog to be public.*

To add a user under a specific role, click the **Add** button, select the desired user in the popup window, click **Add** and then **OK**.



Groups (1 - 9 of 9)	Users (1 - 50 of 119)
Administrative Staff	Adrian Lo (Adrian Lo)
Administrators	Alan Carroll (Alan Carroll)
GroupNames	Alberta Owens (Alberta Owens)
Library	Alex Bell (Alex Bell)
Parents	Alfonso Sherman (Alfonso Sherman)
Registered Users	Alfred Salazar (Alfred Salazar)
Staff	Allison Perez (Allison Perez)
Students	Angelina Ingram (Angelina Ingram)
Teachers	Arlene Hubbard (Arlene Hubbard)
	Barbara Perry (Barbara Perry)

Add

Selected Groups and Users (1)

Charlie Danner (Charlie Danner)

Remove OK Cancel

When selecting user permissions, it is important to keep in mind that there are two types of permission designations: **Direct Permissions** and **Actual Permissions**.

Direct Permissions refers to users who also have access to your blog, as these may be inherited permissions from a parent page. You can add and remove users from the **Direct Permissions** button in the same manner as the **Roles**.

Actual Permissions refers to all the users, within the administrator's group, who have access to the blog. You cannot edit the users in the **Actual Permissions** list as this is just reflecting the permissions that are assigned on the blog.

View Blog

This tab provides a complete and comprehensive overview of the blog including: recent posts, the administration panel, tags, and RSS Feed information.