

Floating licence configuration guide

Overview

A floating licence allows you to install PRIMER 8 software on as many computers as you like, but only a set number of computers (indicated by the number of seats associated with the floating licence key) may use the software simultaneously.

The floating licence is different to our node-locked licencing option in that it doesn't have an offline licence file. Computers using PRIMER 8 with a floating licence must be able to connect to `licensing.primer-e.com` over ports `80` and `443` when the software is in use.

The installer

The floating licence version of PRIMER 8 uses the same installer as the regular version of PRIMER 8. You can download this installation file ('PRIMER8Setup.exe') from: <https://www.primer-e.com/download>.

Authenticating

Using a key

The floating licence version of PRIMER 8 can be authenticated in the same way that the regular version of PRIMER 8 is authenticated. This involves entering the licence key provided into a user interface.

The full instructions to activate PRIMER 8 in this manner can be found here: [Activate PRIMER](#).

Using a config file

A configuration file can be used to provide the licence key automatically, enabling deployment without the user having to provide a key. This is useful for computer labs and managed environments.

Create a file named `PRIMER8.config` with the following content:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<AuthenticationSettings>
  <Mode>Floating</Mode>
  <LicenseKey>YOUR_LICENSE_KEY</LicenseKey>
</AuthenticationSettings>
```

Replace `YOUR_LICENSE_KEY` with your actual licence key.

Place the config file in one of the following locations:

- `%ProgramData%\PRIMER-e\PRIMER8.config` — Applies to all users on the machine (recommended for managed deployments)
- `%LocalAppData%\PRIMER-e\PRIMER8.config` — Applies to the current user only

If both files exist, the `%LocalAppData%` configuration takes priority.

The config file can be deployed before PRIMER is installed. You may need to create the `PRIMER-e` folder first.

On startup, PRIMER 8 reads the config file and authenticates automatically.

Network/Firewall

Please ensure all machines using PRIMER with a floating licence can talk to `licensing.primer-e.com` over port `80` and `443`.

Should the connection fail, PRIMER will retry authentication twice more at set intervals. The server maintains each machine's session for 10 minutes, so if the network recovers before all retries are exhausted, users won't be interrupted.

Licence Seats

A licence seat is counted per user, not per machine. This means multiple users can share the same machine (such as a server) and each will occupy their own seat when using PRIMER. Seats are handed out on a first come, first served basis. When all seats are in use, subsequent users will receive a message saying they are unable to use PRIMER as the seat limit has been reached.

When a user closes the application normally, the seat will be released immediately. Otherwise, the seat will be released when the session expires on the server.

Questions or queries

If you have any questions or queries, please email tech@primer-e.com.

Revision #19

Created 30 January 2026 02:13:52 by Dale

Updated 12 March 2026 02:41:09 by Marti