



OPEN EDUCATION RESOURCES POLICY

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OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES POLICY

Preamble

Against the background of the dream to be an internationally recognised university in Africa, distinguished for engaged scholarship, social responsiveness and an ethic of care, the Council of the North-West University (NWU) has adopted this Open Educational Resources Policy of the NWU on 16 March 2023.

1 Interpretation and application

This policy must be interpreted and applied in a manner consistent with the –

- 1.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996;
- 1.2 Higher Education, 101 of 1997;
- 1.3 National Qualifications Framework, 67 of 2008;
- 1.4 Copyright Act, 98 of 1978
- 1.5 Statute of the North-West University ('the Statute'), and with
- 1.6 all related policies of the NWU and the North-West University Open Educational Resources Declaration of 2018.

2 Definitions

In this policy, unless the context indicates otherwise –

“content developer” means any person (typically an author) engaged in the development of teaching and learning materials;

“copyright” means copyright under the Copyright Act, 1978;

“Creative Commons” refers to the global non-profit organization that provides the terms of open licenses to help overcome legal obstacles to the sharing of knowledge and creativity;

“Institutional Repository” refers to Boloka, the institutional repository of the NWU;

“localization” means adapting open educational resources (OER) in terms of language and content to be appropriate for a selected context;

“OER” means, as defined in *the UNESCO Recommendation on OER (2019)* learning, teaching and research materials in any format and medium that reside in the public domain or are under copyright that have been released under an open license, that permit no-cost access, re-use, re-purpose, adaptation and redistribution by others;

“OER creation” means the development or production of original or adapted quality assured OER;

“open education” means a collection of practices that benefits from online technology to freely share knowledge;

“open learning” means an approach to learning where OER are used and created while advocating learner-centredness and flexibility, opening up access and fostering self-directed learning while embracing diversity and supporting the decolonisation of the curriculum within a multimodal environment;

“open license” means a license that specifies what can and cannot be done with a work (whether sound, text, image or multimedia), grants permissions and states restrictions.

3 Policy statement

Building on the university's *Open Educational Resources Declaration*, it is the policy of the NWU –

- 3.1 to promote and implement the creation, reuse, revision, remixing, redistribution, retention and localization of OER within an open licensing framework through the use of open pedagogy principles in order to support open learning and open education;
- 3.2 to aim to excel in innovative learning and teaching and pioneering research, thereby benefitting society through knowledge;
- 3.3 to be committed to the development of a comprehensive range of academic, professional, vocational and general programmes addressing societal needs;
- 3.4 to be responsive to the well-being of its employees, students and the wider community through optimal interaction, capacity building and sound management practices;
- 3.5 to move towards an openness agenda to educational resources.
- 3.6 to aim to:
 - i. contribute to greater impact and internationalisation through the online open publication of academic content;
 - ii. contribute to the development of innovative bodies of scholarship especially within a context of financial strain and limited access to content among students in higher education in South Africa and elsewhere, and
 - iii. and is committed to academic and professional freedom of academics.

4 Policy objectives

The objectives of this policy are to –

- 4.1 formulate the necessary strategic inputs, outputs, tasks and performance indicators to achieve OER creation, adoption, adaptation and integration in the development and delivery of courses;
- 4.2 develop awareness about the concept and practices related to OER, open pedagogy and open learning among all employees;
- 4.3 build capacity among academic and support employees to use OER appropriately in their professional engagements, open pedagogy, open learning and open education;
- 4.4 prepare institutional guidelines and manuals for OER creation, adoption, adaptation and integration as well as open learning and open education;
- 4.5 establish an institutional repository to distribute OER in conjunction with Library and Information Services and NWU Information Technology;
- 4.6 continuously monitor and ensure that the policy is implemented effectively;
- 4.7 develop and incorporate an effective feedback mechanism from the concerned stakeholders that may facilitate informed decisions for any mid-term corrections during OER implementation;
- 4.8 incorporate changes to the process based on new developments in the field of OER and the teaching and learning context of the NWU;
- 4.9 promote the acquisition of new technologies, hardware, software, and internet connectivity and construct new infrastructure for effective OER creation and integration, and
- 4.10 to commit the university to network and collaborate with organizations and other universities in which OER are used or developed.

5 Scope and applicability

Unless excluded by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning, this policy is applicable to OER teaching and learning content of –

- 5.1 all academic and academic support departments of the North-West University;
- 5.2 all content developers within the university and those engaged by the NWU on a temporary or contract basis;
- 5.3 all types of learning materials released in physical or electronic format;

In cases where material is developed in collaboration or partnership with other institutions, the guidelines governing the collaboration or partnership as indicated in the memorandum of understanding or memorandum of agreement must prevail, provided that any such agreement should duly consider the provisions of this policy before any deviation is agreed upon and approved by the responsible authority of the NWU.

6 Responsibilities

- 6.1 The university management must promote, foster, and reward all efforts towards the adoption, integration and sharing of OER in course design, development, quality assurance and delivery of open pedagogy in order to support open learning and open education.
- 6.2 An OER author may, as the publisher and the copyright owner, decide on the content to be published as OER in consultation with the director of the relevant School or Research Entity.
- 6.3 Academic and support employees must be committed to the philosophy of OER in building capacity and positive attitudes for effective creation, adoption, and integration of OER in the development and delivery of courses as well as other professional engagements.
- 6.4 Academic and support employees must plan and implement suitable activities involving the creation, adoption, adaptation, and integration of OER in order to offer courses and programmes for the learners to enable them to acquire appropriate competencies for desired qualifications through open learning and open education.
- 6.5 The NWU Open Education Resources Sub-Committee of the Senate Committee for Teaching and Learning (OER Sub-Committee) manages and oversees the establishment, the development, and the quality assurance of open educational pedagogy and OER repository or repositories.

7 Quality assurance and review

- 7.1 OER provided by the NWU must be subjected to quality assurance and review.
- 7.2 The OER Sub-Committee must coordinate the adoption of OER by the NWU, open learning and open education quality assurance and best practice guidelines and indicators.
- 7.3 The OER Sub-Committee must report annually to the Senate Committee for Teaching and Learning.
- 7.4 Internal faculty OER quality structures must be established in accordance with the needs and participation in the NWU OER initiatives of the faculty concerned.
- 7.5 All learning resources must be peer reviewed by an internal faculty structure before it may be uploaded on the OER Repository, and the period of such upload must be determined at the time of submission.

8 Copyright and licencing

- 8.1 Copyright in teaching and learning materials, including such materials that are commissioned by the university, vests in the content developer.
- 8.2 Subject to review by the internal OER quality review structure the choice of license may be decided by the content developer.
- 8.3 When revising or remixing existing OER, it is the responsibility of the content developer to comply with licencing requirements.
- 8.4 The license declaration on the OER must be made in the following format:

20XX [Author(s)]. North-West University. Except where otherwise noted, this work is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons - Attribution-ShareAlike [CC-BY-SA 4.0]. To view a copy of this license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/
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- 8.5 Copyright in the institutional logo of the NWU used in all its materials is reserved by the university and use of the logo without written permission is not permitted.
- 8.6 The NWU supports free and open access to all educational content it owns or co-owns and must make it available through the OER repository under a suitable creative commons license.
- 8.7 The OER Sub-Committee may restrict access to teaching and learning materials if it considers such material to be commercially sensitive.

9 Liability

A disclaimer in the following format must be attached to all OER materials:

This publication is released for educational purposes, and all information contained therein is provided on an 'as is' basis. Although the author and publisher have made every effort to ensure that the information in this publication was correct at the time of publication the author and publisher do not assume and hereby disclaim any liability to any party for any loss, damage, or disruption caused by errors or omissions, whether such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident, or any other cause. Any views expressed in the publication are that of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the North-West University. All products and services mentioned are owned by their respective copyright holders, and mere presentation in the publication does not mean endorsement by the North-West University. Derivatives of this work are not authorised to use the logo of the North-West University. Acknowledgement of intellectual property must be made by users.

10 Institutional arrangements

- 10.1 OER produced at the North-West University may be hosted on an online institutional or other suitable external repository.
- 10.2 Capacity building and regular updates and training on new developments in the field of OER must be conducted by the NWU's Centre for Teaching and Learning for stakeholders engaged in OER creation, adoption, adaptation, integration, open learning and open education with the support of the UNESCO Chair on Multimodal Learning and OER.
- 10.3 The Centre for Teaching and Learning must facilitate the translation and localization of OER to allow for contextualised learning and realisation of the university's language policy of functional multilingualism.