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Roles and responsibilities of the Course Team Members of the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL)

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Preamble

The Course Team plays a very important role in the design and development of the course materials of the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL). These course materials are the core materials that are provided to the OUSL students. Various experts from diverse fields are brought together to produce quality course materials from the inception of the OUSL.

Currently, all the Faculties are revising their course materials according to the guidelines provided by the Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF). The need for clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the members of the Course Teams in the context of revisions of course materials and related issues were discussed at the University Course Development Committee (UCDC). The decision was taken at the 48th meeting of the UCDC which was held on 5 July 2018, to submit a document to the Faculty Boards for discussion. The memo was taken up for discussion at the Faculty Board meetings in August 2018 and suggestions by the Faculty Boards were incorporated and submitted to the 49th meeting of the UCDC which was held on 13 September 2018. It was decided to submit the revised document to the Senate for approval and for necessary adoption.

The purpose of this memo is to provide information on the roles and responsibilities of Course Team Members when writing/revising course materials/study guides, the acknowledging mechanism for Course Team Members when revising course materials/study guides and on obtaining appropriate ISBNs.

Definition of a Course Team

> *A course team may comprise a variety of people with skills in and responsibilities for different aspects or stages of the production process: subject matter experts, educational technologists, television/audio producers, editors, illustrators/designers, and such like (Hodgson, (1993, pp. 32).*

A course team may consist of the following members as illustrated in Table 1. These members can be either involved in all the stages throughout the whole process of course design and development from planning to designing and development or can be called for specific purposes when there is a need (e.g. media/multimedia/web/online designers). The specific roles and responsibilities of the course team members are described in detail in Table 1.

Table 1 – Roles and responsibilities of the Course Team members (*according to the OUSL House Style, 2012, ** according to some senate approved documents).

Course Team Member	Roles and Responsibilities
*Course Team Chair	- Responsible for providing academic leadership to the course team and should be an academic member/consultant of the OUSL. - Subject matter specialist within the area of the course. Other subject matter experts are expected to accept the chair's leadership for the life of the team. Under exceptional circumstances, where experts for certain disciplines are unavailable, a senior academic/professional from outside may act as a Course Team Chair. - Responsible for forming a course team by identifying necessary experts and obtaining necessary approvals through relevant Heads and Deans. E.g. subject matter experts as course authors for writing sessions, subject matter experts as content editors, educational technologists, language editors, media/web/graphic designers etc. - Responsible for planning the entire course, through course team discussions by identifying the following: - learning outcomes for the entire course - curriculum - core content areas to be written as printed course materials/study guides - supportive media resources to be developed or either available as OUSL learning resources (video, audio, multimedia, online learning objects etc.) - external resources available from other sources (textbooks, Open Educational Resources (OER), Youtube videos, podcasts, weblinks, etc.). - appropriate delivery mechanism (whether learning resources are integrated in the course as a package using a media-mix, or delivered independently (Print, Audio-visual material as a CD-ROM/DVD, online as a supplementary, blended or online plus). - relevant practical components including industrial training/practical sessions/teaching practices, field visits etc. (if any) for the entire course. - learning activities (as individual tasks or group tasks) for the entire course to facilitate the development of interpersonal skills in accordance with the SLQF guidelines. - types of continuous assessments and summative evaluation (examination, viva, project, portfolio) with the grading criteria for the entire course.

Course Team Member	Roles and Responsibilities
*Course Team Chair	- Responsible for allocating tasks for the members of the course team with realistic timeframes. - Responsible for writing the "*Introduction to the course*" for the entire course and "*Introduction to the Block/Unit*" for each Block/Unit. - Responsible for monitoring the entire process of course design and development through course team meetings. - Responsible for overall quality of the course (both in subject-matter content and in educational effectiveness). - Responsible for endorsing the QA checklist together with the member of the Faculty Course Development Committee (FCDC) of the respective department and obtaining necessary approvals through respective Head and Dean before requesting for printing. - May also be a course author/editor.
*Course Team Manager	- Responsible for the co-ordination of all activities with regard to the design and development process of the course material liaising with the Course Team Chair and with other Course Team members. - Convener of course meetings. - Responsible for achieving targets within the stipulated timeframe by collecting written/edited sessions from the assigned authors/editors. - Responsible for compiling "*Unit of Instruction*" after getting the finalized version from the language editor and prepare the final manuscript for printing. - Responsible for obtaining the ISBN from the Centre for Educational Technology Division (CETMe). - Responsible for submitting the final manuscript to the Printer/OUSL through Director/Operations after obtaining necessary approvals through respective Head and Dean, after ensuring the QA by the Course Team Chair and the member of the FCDC in the respective department.
*Authors	- Subject matter specialists - May be a permanent academic member of the OUSL or a consultant within the same department or from other department/centre of the OUSL or an external academic/professional from other organization who will be responsible for planning the syllabus/content of the course through course team meetings. - Responsible for planning or selecting appropriate media resources to write the assigned sections (textbooks, video, audio, multimedia, online resources, OER etc.). - Responsible for writing assigned sessions.

Course Team Member	Roles and Responsibilities
*Authors	- Responsible for obtaining copyright clearance for relevant learning resources through appropriate channels - Can perform many functions in a single course team such as an editor of other sessions, word processing operator, desktop publisher etc. - May also be a teacher once the course is being delivered to learners.
*Educational Technologist	- Professional with a special interest in the improvement of teaching and learning and assist the authors in improving the course - Advises on matters such as structuring of content, clarifying educational purposes/objectives/learning outcomes, selecting appropriate media, teaching strategies, student activities, self-assessment items, tests, examination and evaluation. - Evaluation of courses is normally carried out by an educational technologist (Hawkridge, 1994 p. 97).
*Content Editor	- Subject matter specialists - May be a permanent academic member of the OUSL or a consultant or an external academic/professional from other organization. - Responsible for editing the subject content of the assigned sessions of the OUSL course materials. - May also be a teacher once the course is being delivered to learners.
*Language Editor	Professional who can help authors in polishing their sessions by correcting spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors, and ensuring consistency of language styles among authors.
ODL Editor (suggested as an alternative name for **Transformer)	A skilled communicator who can liaise with the **external** subject matter specialist whose writing is obscure, winkling out their key ideas and re-expressing them in ways the distance learners will be able to understand by incorporating pedagogical features associated in Open and Distance Learning (ODL)/ self-instructional materials.
*Media Designer	Professional (Director of the programme) with special skills in the technical production of video and audio material of the OUSL.
*Cover Designer	- Professional who designs a cover page and advises authors on layout, typestyle and the overall graphic design of the cover page and texts. - Cover Designer and Graphic Designer can be a same person or two different professionals.
*Graphic Designer	Professional who designs illustrations/graphics.

Course Team Member	Roles and Responsibilities
*Desktop Publisher	▪ A skilled person who is responsible for formatting sessions using the course and unit templates of the OUSL and maintaining the typographic quality of text and images of the printed materials.
*Word processing Operator	▪ Typing the text
Multimedia Designer/Developer	▪ Professional with special skills in designing/developing learning objects or multimedia productions.
Web/Online Designer/Developer	▪ Professional with special skills in designing/developing online courses or web applications.
Translator	▪ Translating English sessions either to Sinhala or to Tamil

References

Hawkridge, D. (1994). Which Team for Open and Distance Learning Materials Production? In F. Lockwood (Ed.), *Materials Production in Open and Distance Learning* (pp. 96-102). UK: Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd.

Hodgson, B. (1993). *Key Terms and Issues in Open and Distance Learning*. London: Kogan Page.

Guidelines for revising OUSL course materials

Guidelines for writing and editing sessions when revising OUSL course materials

1. When writing new sessions for the already existing course, include the name of the new Author to the original Course Team under Authors. The original members of the Course Team should also be included in the Acknowledgements page (refer *OUSL House Style, 2012; pg. ii-iii*)

2. When enhancing the existing session such as adding activities, modifying certain paragraphs and updating existing sessions without writing an entire session for the already existing course, then include the name of the contributor as a new Editor to the original Course Team under Editors. The original members of the Course Team should be included in the Acknowledgements page (refer *OUSL House Style, 2012; pg. ii-iii*)

3. When compiling a revised Block/Unit by combining several parts of the existing Blocks/Units, where several Authors and Editors have contributed to the revision, then include a detailed page at the end of the new Block/Unit indicating the actual contributions of all individuals. The title of the Block/Unit can be the same title of any of the existing Blocks/Units or can be a new title. For example

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[Course code] Block [Number] /Unit [Number] Contributors: Session Authors and Content Editors

Authors

[Name of the Author]: Sessions [Number/s] (Course code of the original Block/Unit)
[Name of the Author]: Sessions [Number/s] (Course code of the revised Block/Unit)

e.g. Dr A Amarasinghe: Sessions 1-4 (MLU2240)
    Dr B Bandara: Sessions 5 (MDU3305)
    Dr C Clement: Sessions 6 (MDU3305)

Content Editors

[Name of the Editor]: Sessions [Number/s] (Course code of the original Block/Unit)
[Name of the Editor]: Sessions [Number/s] (Course code of the revised Block/Unit)

e.g. Dr B Bandara: Sessions 1-4 (MLU2240)
    Dr D Deraniyagala: Sessions 5 and 6 (MDU3305)

Detailed description (if necessary)

Guidelines for obtaining ISBNs to Blocks/Units

It is mandatory to obtain ISBN to all OUSL course materials. If there are several Units in the course (multi-unit), then obtain a separate ISBN to each Unit. If Units are combined as Blocks, then obtain an ISBN to each Block.

Assigning new ISBNs to Blocks/Units

1. If all the sessions are newly written for the Blocks/Units, using a new course code and a new course title, then obtain a new ISBN for each Block/Unit.
2. If more than 50% of the content have been re-written as new content (e.g. 3 new sessions out of 5 sessions), using the **same** course code and **same** course title, then publish the Block/Unit as a **Revised Edition.** Then obtain a new ISBN. The information should be clearly stated before the copyright statement that this Block/Unit is a **Revised Edition** and indicate the new ISBN.
Eg. Revised Edition [2018]
New ISBN.
3. If the course code and the content are the **same** and there is only a change in the course title, then obtain a new ISBN.
4. If the course code is the **same** and there are changes in course title and the content, then obtain a new ISBN.
5. If the contents of the sessions are integrated by combining several Blocks/Units and using the original title of one of the Blocks/Units with a different course code, then obtain a new ISBN.

Retaining the same ISBNs in the Blocks/Units

1. If less than 50% of the content have been re-written to the existing Block/Unit (e.g. 2 new sessions out of 5 sessions), without changing the course code and the course title, then use the same ISBN and publish as a **Revised** version**,** (refer *OUSL House Style, 2012; pg. ii*).
Eg. Revised 2016
Revised 2012
First published 1996.
2. If the course title and the content are the same and there is only a change in the course code, then use the same ISBN.

Table 2 – Checklist for assigning ISBN

Course Code	Course Title	Content	New ISBN	Same ISBN
New	New	New	√	
No change	No change	Changed more than 50% **(as Revised Edition)**	√	
No change	Changed	No change	√	
No change	Changed	Changed more than 50% **(as Revised Edition)**	√	
No change	Changed	Changed less than 50% **(as Revised)**	√	
Changed	No Change	Changed more than 50% by combining several Blocks/Units **(as Revised Edition)**	√	
Changed	No Change	Changed less than 50% by combining several Blocks/Units **(as Revised)**	√	
No change	No change	Changed less than 50% **(as Revised)**		√
Changed	No change	No change		√