

Open Educational Resources (OER) Policy, The Open University of Sri Lanka (Revised 2020)

1. Policy Name

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2. Target Effective date

January 2020

3. Introduction

i. Background

The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) is committed to empower working adult learners to face challenges in a knowledge society by ensuring diverse learning opportunities through Open and Distance Learning (ODL). Its vision is to become the premier ODL institute in Asia through excellence, efficiency and equity in life-long learning. Targeting towards its vision, the OUSL reaches the outreach through high quality, affordable and relevant education to all.

ii Need

The educational process of the OUSL is facilitated through especially designed self-instructional learning resources with limited face-to-face contacts. These learning resources are predominantly in print. However, they have either enhanced or supplemented with other technologies over the years undergoing generations of technologies.

With the open knowledge movement, more and more content are released as open content. They either reside in the public domain or have open licenses enabling free usage of content without violating copyrights of the original creators.

The OUSL also has taken initiatives in this direction since 2014 by promoting the development of Open Educational Resources (OER) and sharing them with the global community in view of expanding access to education, widening the distribution of high-quality educational resources and reducing barriers to learning opportunities and opening lifelong learning opportunities for all. This initiative has been taken in line with the framework for action on Sustainable Development Goal 4: 'Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning' (UNESCO, 2016a, p. 7).

iii Purpose & Context

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction, guidance, and advocacy in internalizing OER adoption, adaptation, creation and integration using the open license in the OUSL learning resources and provide the direction to follow Standard

Operating Procedures (SOP) of the OUSL pertaining to course design and development.

iv. Rationale

The OUSL formulated the policy on OER and was approved at the 327th Senate held on 20th August, 2015 (Memo No: VV/327/04/12(ii) and at the 414th Council held on 23rd October, 2015 in order to streamline the processes associated with OER development and delivery. It was felt necessary to review and revise the existing OUSL OER Policy to accommodate new directions and developments in the OER movement.

4 Policy Principles

- Provision of equal educational opportunities for all by permitting free and open access for quality educational resources
- Enhance freedom and flexibility in the use and customisation of educational resources to suit diverse learning needs and contexts
- Promote innovative, creative, participatory and collaborative educational practices among teachers and learners.

5 Policy Statements

- 5.1 The OUSL shall be committed to promoting the concept of OER and shall foster all efforts towards the adoption of OER in course design, development and delivery of OUSL courses and other professional engagements
- 5.2 The OUSL shall develop capacity among its staff for effective adoption of OER thereby helping them to acquire necessary competencies and positive attitudes to sustain effectively in a knowledge society
- 5.3 The OUSL shall recognize and reward efforts of OER adoption by its teachers and learners
- 5.4 The OUSL, as the publisher/producer and copyrights owner shall decide on the content to be published as OUSL OER through the Senate in consultation with the relevant Faculty / Department / Division/Centre
- 5.5 The OUSL shall ensure the adherence of quality standards of the OUSL OER through Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)
- 5.6 The OUSL shall ensure that the OER Policy is implemented effectively through continuous monitoring
- 5.7 The OUSL shall periodically review and amend the OER Policy considering the new developments in the field of OER and with the OUSL experience and communicate to relevant stakeholders for effective implementation.

6 Policy Goals

The goals of the OER Policy are to:

- 6.1 Provide direction, guidance, and advocacy towards internalizing OER adoption at the OUSL, in terms of reuse, adaptation, creation and open licensing of learning resources and publishing them as OUSL OER
- 6.2 Promote and encourage OER adoption in the course design, development and delivery of courses and other professional engagements at the OUSL.

7 Applicability & Scope

This OER Policy is applicable to:

- 7.1 All staff of the OUSL including staff in the Faculties, Academic and Administrative Divisions, Regional and Study Centres and other organizational entities of the OUSL.
- 7.2 All content developers/producers within the OUSL and those engaged by the OUSL on temporary/contract basis
- 7.3 All collaborators/partners of the OUSL
- 7.4 All types of learning material (course material, audio, video, multimedia, online learning objects etc.) which are created or transformed as OUSL OER and are released in physical or electronic format according to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) of course design and development.

8 Policy Implementation

8.1 Strategies

- 8.1.1 Formulate necessary strategic mechanisms and procedures to enable OER adoption in the course design, development and delivery of OUSL courses and other professional engagements
- 8.1.2 Provide resources, facilities and other mechanisms to support the effective implementation of the OER Policy
- 8.1.3 Raise awareness on the concepts and practices related to OER among all stakeholders
- 8.1.4 Develop competencies among the OUSL staff for the adoption of OER through Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes
- 8.1.5 Provide incentives and rewards for staff who actively demonstrate effective efforts of OER adoption
- 8.1.6 Establish and maintain a quality assurance system for publishing OUSL OER
- 8.1.7 Establish a mechanism to continuously monitor the implementation of the OUSL OER Policy
- 8.1.8 Implement an effective feedback mechanism to review and amend the OER Policy periodically.

8.2 Responsibilities and Authority

- 8.2.1 The OUSL is the absolute owner of the copyrights of any content published as OUSL OER
- 8.2.2 The OUSL reserves the copyrights of the institutional logo used in all of its material and does not permit using logo without written permission
- 8.2.3 Unless otherwise specified, the OUSL supports free and open access to all educational content it owns or co-owns as OUSL OER and will make them available through the OUSL OER repository
- 8.2.4 The OUSL shall ensure the implementation of the policy by assigning responsibilities and authority to relevant divisions/units/centres with clear guidelines and mandates
- 8.2.5 The OUSL, as the publisher/producer and copyrights owner, shall decide on the contents of OUSL OER through the Senate

- 8.2.6 The relevant Department/Division/Centre shall take the responsibility of obtaining permission to publish OUSL educational resources as OUSL OER from the OUSL through the Senate using the standard OUSL protocol
- 8.2.7 The Staff Development Centre (SDC) of the OUSL shall be responsible for conducting awareness-raising and capacity building programmes for stakeholders engaged in OER adoption
- 8.2.8 The Centre for Educational Technology Media (CETMe) shall be responsible for preparing all required guidelines, manuals and Standards Operating Procedures (SOP) for OUSL OER adoption
- 8.2.9 The Centre for Educational Technology Media (CETMe) shall be responsible for transforming the Senate approved OUSL educational resources into OUSL OER by adhering to OUSL quality standards
- 8.2.10 The Centre for Educational Technology Media (CETMe) shall ensure that the material developed by the OUSL shall comply with and be released under a *Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0)*
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>
- 8.2.11 For derivatives and reproductions of other CC licensed material, the institution will respect the CC provisions and the licenses therein
- 8.2.12 The license declaration on the OER created by the OUSL will be in the following format:

© 20XX The Open University of Sri Lanka. Except where otherwise noted, this work is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0). To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 444 Castro Street, Suite 900, Mountain View, California, 94041, USA

- 8.2.13 The OUSL shall provide facilities to host quality assured OUSL OER in an online institutional repository maintained by the OUSL Library with the technical assistance of the IT Division of the OUSL
- 8.2.14 All OER material in the OUSL OER repository will carry a disclaimer indicating that the material is for educational purposes only and that the OUSL absolves itself of any practical misuse of the OER material or their content. An additional caveat will indicate that derivatives of this work are not authorized to use the OUSL's logo without prior written authorisation from the institution. The disclaimer will have the following format:

The publication is released for educational purposes, and all information provided are in 'as is' basis. Although the author/s and publisher have made every effort to ensure that the information in this publication was correct at press time, the author/s 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. Derivatives of this work are not authorised to use the logo of the OUSL.

8.3 Monitoring & Evaluation

- 8.3.1 The OUSL will periodically monitor the implementation of the OUSL OER Policy across Faculties through appropriate bodies and assess its effectiveness
- 8.3.2 The OUSL will review and revise the OER Policy in accordance with international developments and new trends as appropriate, in every 5 years
- 8.3.3 The OUSL will ensure that the revised OUSL OER Policy is effectively communicated to all relevant stakeholders for implementation.

9 Glossary

Open Educational Resources (OER)

Open Educational Resources (OER) are, learning, teaching and research material in any format and medium that reside in the Public Domain or are under the copyright that has been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, reuse, repurpose, adaptation and redistribution by others

(UNESCO, 2019). <<https://en.unesco.org/news/intergovernmental-expert-meeting-adopts-revised-draft-recommendation-open-educational-resources>>.

Open Educational Resources (OER) are, “teaching, learning and research materials in any medium, digital or otherwise, that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions. Open licensing is built within the existing framework of intellectual property rights as defined by relevant international conventions and respects the authorship of the work” (UNESCO, 2012, p.1)

<http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CI/WPFD2009/English_Declaration.html>.

Open Licensing

Open license refers to a license that respects the intellectual property rights of the copyright owner and provides permissions granting the public the rights to access, re-use, re-purpose, adapt, and redistribute educational materials (<https://www.icde.org/icde-blog/oerwebinar>).

Creative Commons Licenses

Creative Commons provides free, easy-to-use copyright licenses to make a simple and standardized way to give the public permission to share and use your creative work—on conditions of your choice (<https://creativecommons.org>).

OER Integration

This is viewed as a logical and systematic approach to the “Five Rs” of Reusing, Revising, Remixing, Redistributing and Retaining of OER (Hilton, Wiley, Stein and Johnson, 2010).

- *Retain – the right to make, own, and control copies of the content*
- *Reuse – the right to use the content in a wide range of ways (e.g., in a class, in a study group, on a website, in a video)*
- *Revise – the right to adapt, adjust, modify, or alter the content itself (e.g., translate the content into another language)*

- **Remix** – the right to combine the original or revised content with other open content to create something new (e.g., incorporate the content into a mashup)
- **Redistribute** – the right to share copies of the original content, your revisions, or your remixes with others (e.g., give a copy of the content to a friend).

<https://opencontent.org/blog/archives/3221>.

OER Adoption

This is viewed as using OER by applying the “Five Rs” - Reusing, Revising, Remixing, Redistributing and Retaining and/or Creation of OER.

Copyrights

Laws that regulate the use of the work of a creator, such as an artist or author. This includes copying, distributing, altering and displaying creative, literary and other types of work as per copyright law of [country]. Unless otherwise stated in a contract, the author or creator of a work retains the copyright. The author(s) retains the moral rights to assign the rights to any other person or legal entity, and share the materials with others in any other conditions he/she may desire (COL template, 2016).

Institutional Repository

A set of services offered by an institution to the members of its community for the management and dissemination of digital materials created by the institution and its community members. It is most essentially an organizational commitment to the stewardship of these digital materials, including long-term preservation where appropriate, as well as organization and access or distribution (Lynch, 2003).

Knowledge Society

This is viewed as a community or formal association of people who acknowledges the strength of knowledge creation and are committed to making effective use of networking of people with similar interests and in this process contributes to this knowledge.

10 Attributions and References

Attributions

This revised version of the OUSL OER Policy is based on the following sources:

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