



University of the Highlands and Islands

Open Educational Resources (OER) Policy

Table 1: Policy administration

Policy administration	Details
Lead Officer (Post):	Digital and Open Education Lead
Responsible Office/ Department:	Learning and Teaching
Responsible Committee:	QAEC
Review Officer (Post):	Digital and Open Education Lead
Date policy approved:	07/12/2021
Date policy last reviewed and updated:	07/12/2022
Date policy due for review:	Every 2 years or earlier if required
Date of Equality Impact Assessment:	21/10/2020
Date of Privacy Impact Assessment:	N/A

Accessible versions of this policy are available upon request. Please contact the Governance and Policy Officer on 01463 279000.

Policy summary

Table 2: Policy summary

Section summaries and compliance	Details
Overview	<p>The university has, through its Framework for the Development of Open Educational Practices, the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy, and the Widening Access Framework already shown its commitment to the more open use, reuse and sharing of digital assets. This policy will support these existing initiatives, enabling the university to realise the efficiencies and potential of open educational practices in the enhancement of learning and teaching that can be achieved from using and reusing freely available digital content and by sharing locally created content.</p> <p>Increasingly there is an expectation, and indeed a requirement from funding bodies e.g., the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), to make freely available the output of publicly funded initiatives and projects. This is designed to maximise their investment, promote reuse and reducing duplication across the sector. This policy will provide a basis for ensuring the university is prepared to meet these requirements.</p>
Purpose	<p>This policy and associated guidance underpin the Framework for the Development of Open Educational Practices, the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy and the Widening Access Framework and outline the position of the University of the Highlands and Islands, partners and subsidiaries, on the use and development by staff and students of Open Educational Resources (OER) for practice in learning and teaching. In addition, it supports activity in relation to meeting funding body requirements for open published outputs from projects and initiatives.</p> <p>To support staff and students across the university in the use, reuse and sharing of OERs to enhance learning and teaching within our context as a geographically and digitally dispersed institution, promoting education for all, sustainability in the curriculum and contributing to the health, economic and cultural wellbeing of the global community.</p>

Section summaries and compliance	Details
	To encourage equality and diversity in the curriculum through greater transparency of content and processes.
Scope	In the first instance this policy has been created to support engagement in OER use and practice by the HE teaching and research staff and students and university professional services staff.
Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic council • Learning and Information Services • Learning and Teaching • Partnership council • QAEC
Implementation and monitoring	<p>Learning and Teaching</p> <p>0.05 staff time = 1 day per month</p>
Risk implications	<p>Failure to effectively and fully implement the University’s Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy and specifically the Framework for the Development of Open Educational Practices approved by Academic Council in 2019.</p> <p>Failure to fulfil ESIF project funding obligations relating to make publicly funded resources openly available.</p> <p>Failure to meet SFC expectations on the development of open educational practices including creation and use of Open Educational Resources.</p> <p>Institutional reputational damage.</p> <p>Low visibility in the sector in relation to open practices.</p> <p>Fines from copyright and accessibility agencies.</p>
Link with Strategy	<p>Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy – Value 9 – Harnessing open education approaches.</p> <p>Framework for the Development of Open Educational Practices.</p>

Section summaries and compliance	Details
Equality Impact Assessment	21 October 2020
Privacy Impact Assessment	Not Applicable

1. Policy Statement

The university has, through its Framework for the Development of Open Educational Practices, the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy, and the Widening Access Framework has already shown its commitment to the more open use, reuse and sharing of digital assets. This policy will support these existing initiatives, enabling the university to realise the efficiencies and potential of open educational practices in the enhancement of learning and teaching that can be achieved from using and reusing freely available digital content and by sharing locally created content.

Increasingly there is an expectation, and indeed a requirement from funding bodies e.g., the Scottish Funding Council (SFC), to make freely available the output of publicly funded initiatives and projects. This is designed to maximise their investment, promote reuse and reducing duplication across the sector. This policy will provide help to ensure that the university is prepared to meet these requirements.

Staff and students may wish to use OERs to support learning and teaching, including images, audio or video resources, animations, and other digital resources. Staff may also use a wide range of self-generated teaching materials to support high quality teaching, including teaching notes, handouts, audio, images, animations, multimedia materials and others. They may wish to create and publish these resources as OERs.

Engaging with open educational practices provides an opportunity for more sustainable teaching practices through harnessing freely available OER and through repurposing resources available internally.

2. Definitions

Creative Commons: Creative Commons is a global non-profit organization that enables sharing and reuse of creativity and knowledge through the provision of free legal tools. (Creative Commons, 2020). They achieve this by providing a set of standardised licenses that can be used by rights owners to easily and safely share their resources and use the resources provided by others.

Framework for the Development of Open Educational Practices: the university's commitment to the development of Open Educational Resources outlining six areas of focus and a roadmap for the development of Open Educational Practices across the university.

Open Educational Practices (OEP): Considered to be transformative and builds on the use of open educational resources to facilitate innovative learning and teaching, for example collaborative and flexible learning, open sharing of teaching practices and the use of open spaces.

Open Education Resources (OER): “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.” (UNESCO, 2012 OER Paris Declaration).

3. Purpose

Aims

1. Achieve the aspirations of the University Learning and Teaching Strategy and align with its Widening Access Framework and the commitment to ‘achieving widening access and achieving a fair balance of entrants to higher education’.
2. Ensure the successful implementation of the university Framework for the Development of Open Educational Practices.
3. To meet our open education obligations to funding bodies such as the Scottish Funding Council and to fulfil external project funding (e.g. ESIF) requirements to produce openly available educational resources and research outputs.
4. To comply with the aims of the Scottish Open Education Declaration endorsed by the Scottish Funding Council.
5. To widen access to education and educational resources including within our local communities.
6. To promote, consolidate and share academic partner and university assets.

Risks

To reduce institutional risk from:

- Failure to effectively and fully implement the university’s Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy and specifically the Framework for the Development of Open Educational Practices approved by Academic Council in 2019.
- Failure to fulfil ESIF project funding obligations relating to make publicly funded resources openly available.
- Failure to meet SFC expectations on the development of open educational practices including creation and use of OER.
- Institutional reputational damage from the publication of non-compliant resources.
- Low visibility in the sector in relation to open practices.

- Fines from copyright and accessibility agencies.
- Publication of non-compliant resources.
- Publication of commercially sensitive or valuable content.

Benefits

- Ensuring the effective and full implementation of the university's Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy and specifically the Framework for the Development of Open Educational Practices approved by Academic Council in 2019.
- To ensure alignment with the sector wide move to open educational practices
- To produce quality, open educational resources that will enhance and promote the institution's reputation and ensure more sustainable teaching practices.
- To widen access to education and educational resources including within our local communities.

4. Scope

In the first instance this policy has been created to support engagement in OER use and practice by HE teaching and research staff and students and university professional services staff.

The policy will support staff and students to:

- make available discrete and small-scale digital education resources (e.g., documents, multimedia objects, interactivities and quizzes) that could be potentially repurposed internally or externally, through existing and new learning object repositories, to support discipline related learning and teaching practice
- repurpose relevant existing OER available on the Internet, for reuse and to support learning, teaching and assessment within university programmes of study
- share work undertaken and produced by students individually or collaboratively in the context of their studies, where this may have a wider benefit beyond the university (and including taught undergraduate and postgraduate dissertations)
- enable the publication of outputs and exemplars of good practice developed from the ALPINE scheme for professional recognition in learning and teaching
- share policies, guidance and other digital documents that would benefit the wider sector and increase the university's standing and visibility

- share university resources, policies and guidance that are themselves partly based on existing Creative Commons licensed resources and which therefore are required to be shared via a Creative Commons license
- share funded project resources.

5. Exceptions

While the policy is created in the first instance to support open practice in our HE provision, and at university level, we hope that going forward Academic Partners will adopt this policy or an adaptation of it in enabling OER practice with respect to their own provision and context.

This policy does not cover open access publishing of research outputs (e.g., journal publications, monographs, and open data sets). Information relating to this can be found on the [UHI Research Publications \(Open Access\) LibGuide](#).

6. Notification

All HE teaching and research staff and students will be notified of this policy by Partnership Council, teaching communications team, the university and LTA newsletters and Yammer. Groups to be notified include: Faculty Deans, Subject Network Leaders, AP Quality Managers, Directors of Studies, Research Degree Committee, HE Programme and Module Leaders.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- Ownership: Learning and Teaching Academy (LTA), Learning and Teaching
- Monitoring: Digital and Open Education Lead, LTA
- Reviewing: Digital and Open Education Lead, LTA
- Approving: QAEC, Academic Council, Information and Consultation Committee
- Compliance: Quality Managers, HN and Degree Programme Leaders and Subject Network Leaders.

8. Procedures

1. Does OER have to be made open as part of a contract?
 - a. Yes – go to specific publication platform guidance, e.g., UHI's LOR guidance

- b. No – go to 2.
2. Has this resource been assessed for its commercial value and cleared for publication?
- a. Yes – go to 3
 - b. No – consult the rights holder (e.g., AP and/or university).
 - c. Don't know – consult the rights holder (e.g., AP and/or university).
3. Has the rights holder given permission for this to be made open e.g., employer (AP and/or university), and any third-party rights holders who has work contained in the OER?
- a. Yes – go to specific publication platform guidance e.g., UHI's LOR guidance
 - b. No – permission to publish as an OER must be obtained in writing prior to proceeding. Once permission is obtained, go to step 1.

9. Policy Detail

Introduction

One of the ten key values of the university's Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy 2022 (LTES) is the commitment to develop and further develop online and other forms of open education approaches in supporting and enhancing learning and teaching.

Staff and student engagement with open educational practices will enable the university to meet the aspirations of the remaining eleven values, including integrated and sustainable teaching practices, active and creative use of technology, providing a connected learning experience and learner choice and personalisation.

Rationale

The University of the Highlands and Islands relies heavily on digital content for the delivery of its academic programmes across the pedagogic spectrum, it is appropriate therefore that staff and students are encouraged to embrace the 5Rs of OER: retain, reuse, revise, remix

and redistribute¹. By doing this, and with consideration, we have the opportunity to enhance the quality of the student experience by creating the conditions for collaboration, recognition, promotion and development both within and outwith the university.

Staff and students may wish to use OERs to support learning and teaching, including images, audio or video resources, animations, and other digital resources. Staff may also use a wide range of self-generated teaching materials to support high quality teaching, including teaching notes, handouts, audio, images, animations, multimedia materials and others. They may wish to create and publish these resources as OERs.

Ownership of Intellectual Property

The University, Academic Partners, or subsidiaries, as appropriate in each case, owns the intellectual property rights (IPR) of teaching and learning materials created by staff in the course of their employment, unless an agreement to the contrary has been established.

Ownership of Intellectual Property created by students is outlined in the [Terms and Conditions for Applicants and Students](#). Students should refer to the terms where they will also be directed towards appropriate guidance.

The right to publish

The decision to publish OER created by staff may only be made by the rights holder, e.g., the employer, i.e., the Academic Partner and/or the University or funding bodies if applicable.

It is the responsibility of staff and students to ensure that:

- they have the necessary rights to publish an OER and
- all published resources comply with all relevant policies (e.g., copyright, IPR, accessibility).

The Academic Partner(s) and/or the University reserves the right to remove resources that do not comply with policy, and/or request removal of resources from external repositories/sites.

10. Using Creative Commons Licensing

Staff and students are advised to publish OERs using a [Creative Commons attribution licence](#) (CC BY). Other Creative Commons licences (for example to add a non-commercial use or

¹ “Defining the “Open” in Open Content and Open Educational Resources” was written by David Wiley and published freely under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 license at <http://opencontent.org/definition/>.

share-alike element) may be used if the creators feel this is necessary or appropriate for their particular resource, or to comply with the licence of any third-party content used in the resource. Guidance on attribution

The University recommends that written and interactive digital teaching resources should be published in an appropriate repository or public-access website in order to maximise discovery and use by others. Where OERs have been created as part of an externally funded activity, any storage and/or repository locations mandated as a condition of the funding should be used.

When publishing OERs always check the guidance and restrictions of respective platforms.

Staff and students are encouraged to collect data where possible on usage of their OERs.

Where students are producing OERs as part of their programme of study or within a staff-directed project, these guidelines should be followed and OERs must be checked by a member of staff before publication to ensure it complies with university policy. OERs may not be published if there is any doubt about compliance.

When creating and publishing OERs, the copyright owner(s) must be visibly attributed. The copyright owner will normally be the employer (Academic Partner and/or the University of the Highlands and Islands) for OERs created by staff.

Where requested and appropriate, Author(s) should also be properly acknowledged, giving recognition for work undertaken, along with date and Creative Commons licence applied so that others can clearly understand what permissions for reuse are being granted.

When reusing existing OERs staff should follow the [guidance on best practices for attribution](#).

11. Legislative Framework

The Scottish Funding Council has committed to the aims of the Scottish Open Education Declaration in and it is being considered for adoption by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) in their [College and University Sector ICT Strategy 2019 – 2021](#). In addition, the SFC are clear in their support for the use of open licenses for all educational resources created with public funding. Acknowledging the potential impact on SFC funded projects it is prudent that we expand the practice of open education across the university.

12. Related Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Other Resources

Policies

- [Academic standards and Quality Regulations](#)
- [Copyright Policy](#)
- [Intellectual Property](#)
- [Recording of taught sessions policy](#)

Frameworks

- UHI's [Framework for the Development of Open Educational Practices](#)
- UHI's [Learning and Teaching Enhancement Strategy](#)
- UHI's [Widening Access Framework](#)

Resources

- [Attribution of third-party materials](#)
- [Copyright Information for staff](#)
- [EDU support portal](#) (staff)
- [Frequently Asked Questions - Creative Commons](#)
- [Research Publishing \(Open Access\)](#)
- [Staff resources index: Copyright](#) (staff access only)
- [Terms and conditions for applicants and students](#)
- [What is creative commons and what do you do?](#)

13. Acknowledgements

This document builds upon:

- [Coventry University OER Policy](#)
- [GCU Interim OER policy](#)
- [University of Leeds OERs](#)
- [University of Edinburgh OER policy.](#)

14. Version Control and Change History

Version	Date	Approved by	Amendment(s)	Author
0				
1				
2				
3				
4				

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