



OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES POLICY

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1 INTRODUCTION

The central mission of the Botswana Open University (BOU) is to create, preserve, and disseminate knowledge through the promotion of self-directed learning, teaching, research and innovation. It is the University's obligation to disseminate quality products and services in a manner that brings benefit to the institution, staff, students and the public. This Policy is intended to promote the norms and values that foster and stimulate the open and free exchange of ideas and opinions in line with the mission and vision of BOU and its role as a publicly-funded university.

2 DEFINITIONS

Open Educational 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. 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”. *Paris OER Declaration* (UNESCO, 2012, p.1)

OER Creation

The development/production of open content and its publication with an open license.

OER Integration

A logical and systematic approach to the “five Rs” (Hilton, Wiley, Stein & Johnson, 2010) of reusing, revising, remixing, redistributing and retaining of OER.

Knowledge Society

A society in which the prosperity and well-being of its people come from the creation, sharing and use of knowledge, especially by exploiting technological advances.

3 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Policy is to:

- a. develop awareness about the concept and practices related to OER among all staff and students;
- b. build capacity among the academic and non-academic support staff for the creation, identification, storing and integration of OER in their professional engagements;

- c. promote the preparation of all required guidelines and manuals for OER creation and integration including open licensing procedures;
- d. facilitate the establishment of an OER repository containing open licensed materials and an in-house repository of external OER for use by staff and students;
- e. enable the procurement and installation of the required hardware and software infrastructure for OER creation and integration;
- f. formulate the necessary strategic inputs and outputs, tasks and performance indicators to achieve OER creation and integration in the development and delivery of courses;
- g. support the development of an effective feedback mechanism that will enable BOU to take informed decisions for any mid-term revisions in the implementation of OER integration; and
- h. enable changes in the OER implementation process according to international developments in the field and the requirements of BOU.

4 SCOPE

The Policy covers the development of all learning materials, courses and BOU publications generated through public funding, and through other funding sources if stipulated. It is focussed on the Creative Commons license regime. It applies to all Schools, Departments, Units, Centres, staff and students at BOU.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

- a. The University will promote, foster and reward all efforts towards the creation, integration, sharing, re-using and re-purposing of OER in course design, development and delivery in an e-learning environment for achieving increased quality and cost-efficiency;
- b. BOU, as publisher and copyrights owner, will decide on the content to be published as University-OER in consultation with the relevant Department/ School / Division;
- c. BOU staff will be committed to the philosophy of OER in building capacity and positive attitudes for effective OER creation and OER integration for the development and delivery of courses as well as other professional engagements;
- d. All academic staff will plan and implement suitable academic activities involving the creation and use of OER by students and thereby help them acquire competencies required for a knowledge society.

6 PROCEDURES AND STANDARDS

- a. OER creation and integration at BOU is viewed as a shared responsibility executed in both centralized and decentralized ways;
- b. Senate shall play a major role in driving, promoting and supporting the University's OER integration initiative, with the oversight of Council;
- c. All members of the University community shall recognize and support OER practices;
- d. Deans of Schools, Heads of Departments and Directors are responsible for ensuring that policy requirements are fulfilled among their own staff;
- e. All academic and relevant support staff will receive intensive training followed by regular ongoing expert support to become competent in OER creation and integration in courses.

7 COPYRIGHT

7.1 All publicly funded OER works will be published under the Creative Commons license i.e. Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0) license and the license declaration on OER created will be as follows:

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7.2 It is the responsibility of the author of the content to comply with the above when revising or remixing existing OER into the material to ensure that this Policy on OER is not violated.

7.3 The Library will be the custodian of managing the various OER repositories centrally.

8 IMPLEMENTATION

The roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the Open Educational Resources Policy are as follows:

8.1 Council – Provides governance oversight of the implementation of the Policy through regular reports.

8.2 Executive Management – Ensures accountability and resources for implementation of the Policy.

8.3 Senate – Facilitates and monitors the implementation of the Policy.

8.4 University Research and Innovation Committee of Senate (URIC) – Responsible for the University-wide implementation, management and quality assurance of the Policy.

8.5 Open Educational Resources Steering Committee - A standing sub-committee of URIC that will have operational responsibility for the promotion and implementation of the Policy. The Committee will be comprised of representative stakeholders and its Secretariat will be the Centre for Research and Innovation.

9 REVIEW

The Policy shall be reviewed every three years or earlier as necessary.