



Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts.

NATIONAL POLICY ON OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

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1. POLICY OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction in the use of open educational resources (hereinafter referred to as OER) to increase access to and support quality learning and teaching in Fiji's education and training system. In doing so, the policy seeks to strengthen commitment to OER by all concerned including the Government.

2. POLICY

- 2.1 In recognition of the potential in OER to widen access to education at all levels, all responsible agencies, including the Ministry of Education, shall promote awareness of OER and its benefits as a matter of priority.
- 2.2 As educational resources that are freely available, OERs shall be used by educators and students in the production of educational materials to match local curriculum requirements and raise the quality of programmes of learning.
- 2.3 The legal framework of open licensing shall facilitate the re-use, revision, re-mixing, redistribution and retention of educational material.
- 2.4 All teachers shall be encouraged to develop OERs under the legal framework of the Creative Commons and shall indicate the licensing conditions clearly on the resource itself.
- 2.5 The Ministry of Education shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining an OER repository which shall adopt quality assurance mechanisms including peer review, user ratings, and training of content developers and shall pursue the progressive open licensing of all textbooks.
- 2.6 To facilitate access to learning and teaching resources, enabling environments for ICT including infrastructure, broadband connectivity, widespread mobile technology and reliable electrical power supply shall be established.
- 2.7 OER shall be easily found and retrieved through the adoption of appropriate open standards in diverse media while collaboration between education, industry and the media and telecommunications sector shall be encouraged to promote the sharing of materials in diverse media.
- 2.8 The development and adaptation of OER in a variety of contexts shall be encouraged within government and non-government institutions taking into account the cultural diversity within Fiji.

- 2.9 Open licensing shall be used for educational materials including research resources produced with public funds to maximize their impact in education and training while restrictions, if any, shall be on a case by case basis.
- 2.10 Where a case can be made for commercial exploitation of resources, authors or institutions shall be entitled to insert a traditional, All Rights Reserved Copyright licence, but only after submission of a justification of this restriction has been supplied to the specific agency funding the work and approval having been granted for this in writing by the agency in question.
- 2.11 Research on the production, use and re-contextualisation of OER and its impact shall determine the quality and cost-efficiency of learning and teaching due to OER and thus inform government/public investment in OER.
- 2.12 This policy shall apply to all public and private early childhood centres (hereinafter referred to as ECEs), primary, secondary and post – secondary educational and training institutions including universities and to all other government funded or non-government and private institutions¹ operating in Fiji.

3. BACKGROUND:

- 3.1 Fiji recognizes the potential in OER to play a major role in expanding equal opportunities to access quality education and contribute in a significant way towards the development of a smarter Fiji. This is so due to OER's ability to provide free and adaptable learning and teaching materials. OER allows the adaptation or adoption of existing learning and teaching materials, avoids duplication of efforts and promotes innovative use of resources in different pedagogical contexts.
- 3.2 At the same time, it is noted that there are issues relating to the use of OERs which include resistance from publishers.
- 3.3 The benefits of OER to teaching are many including:
 - 3.3.1 Reducing barriers to education , including access, cost, language and format.
 - 3.3.2 Transforming teaching and learning and enabling effective pedagogy.
 - 3.3.3 Enabling the free access to and reuse of human knowledge in all its forms.

- 3.3.4 Enhancing educational opportunities to foster development and more productive , free societies.
- 3.3.5 Promoting scientific research as publicly open activities;
- 3.3.6 Facilitating outreach to disadvantaged communities.
- 3.4 The need for relevant policies and effective implementation strategies on OER therefore needs to be addressed to make educational resources freely available for reuse and repurposing through the use of open licenses. In this regard, this policy recognizes its place within or alongside the ICT in Education Policy of the Ministry of Education to ensure wider acceptance and use of OERs as an educational tool.
- 3.5 The legal dimension of OER is first and foremost to be understood. It carries with it a moral obligation which, if complied with, can promote a healthy culture of sharing.
- 3.6 The Creative Commons licence is the preferred form of open licence. The six types of Creative Commons licence that are available for use are listed in **Appendix 1.**

4. **DEFINITIONS:**

- 4.1. **Open Educational Resources (OER)** : OER designates “teaching and learning materials in any medium, digital or otherwise, that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open licence that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions.”
- 4.2 **Royalties** : Sum of money paid to an author of a product which may be a book, or a piece of music etc. for its use.
- 4.3 **Streaming videos** : Content sent in compressed form in the internet and can be viewed in real time.
- 4.4 **Multimedia applications:** The application of a combination of multimedia sources e.g. text, graphics, images, audio, video
- 4.5 **Podcasts** : Audio and video broadcasts that can be downloaded to a media player or computer
- 4.6 **Open licence:** A document that specifies what can be and cannot be done with a work whether it be sound, text, image or multimedia. It allows one to access, re-use and re-distribute a work with few or no restriction.

4.7 **Creative Commons:** Creative Commons (CC) is a non-profit organization that is devoted to expanding the range of creative works available for others to build on legally and to share. CC licences are the global standard for openly licensing OER.

4.8 **Private institutions:** Legally established organizations or networks

5. RELEVANT LEGISLATIONS AND AUTHORITIES

5.1 Copyright Act of Fiji 1999

5.2 Education Act [Cap 26

6. PROCEDURES

The implementation of this policy within the public and private sector shall be undertaken in the following ways:

6.1 All educational institutions from early childhood centres to secondary schools, whether private or public, shall, under the Ministry of Education, develop OER policies, guidelines and procedures as appropriate, that are relevant to their organizations and which are consistent with this policy.

6.2 At the tertiary level, the Fiji Higher Education Commission shall facilitate the implementation of OER while working closely with individual institutions.

6.3 All other government funded or non-government and private institutions or agencies operating in Fiji shall develop their own policies and procedures in OER that are relevant to their organizations and are consistent with this policy.

7. **EFFECTIVE DATE:** 04 January 2016

8. **REVIEW DATE:** 04 January 2017

9. **KEY SEARCH WORDS:** OER, open licence, re-mixing, repository

10. **APPROVED BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, HERITAGE & ARTS, DR. MAHENDRA REDDY**



04/01/16

Signature

Date

APPENDIX 1

1

THE LICENCES

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