

How-to guide: Creating OER

The importance of creating Open Educational Resources (OER) has increased in the educational landscape. The term „Open Educational Resources“ refers to freely available educational materials that are publicly accessible and can be shared and reused by teachers and learners.

If no resources can be found that match your own requirements, you can create your own open educational resources (by creating new ones or adapting existing OER). The issue of producing open educational resources (OER) has a strong overlap with the production of digital teaching and learning materials in general. The key difference is that OER must fulfil special requirements in the areas of technical, legal and didactic reusability.

Within the framework of the [Hamburg Open Online University](#), so-called „toolchains“ have been and are being developed that describe the process of creating digital materials from the user's perspective.

A ["Toolchain"](#) in this context is a sequence of tools, software and methods used to create OER and other digital teaching and learning materials. These toolchains provide support for different aspects of material creation, including technical implementation, legal considerations and didactic design.

1. **Technical implementation:** Technical implementation refers to the selection and use of software and tools to create the OER. This may include the creation of text documents, videos, interactive applications or other digital content. The choice of the right tools and platforms can influence the quality and re-usability of the materials.
2. **Legal aspects:** With OER, clarification of licensing and copyright issues is crucial. The materials must be licensed so that others can freely use, edit and redistribute them. This requires a clear knowledge of the Creative Commons licences and other relevant legal aspects.
3. **Didactic design:** Didactic design concerns the pedagogical conception and structure of the materials. It is important to ensure that the materials support the learning objectives, are engagingly designed and promote effective learning processes.

Prerequisites for OER production

When producing Open Educational Resources (OER), it is important to consider certain aspects to ensure legal certainty and reusability. Here are some important considerations:

1. **Use Open Content:** If you want to publish a work as OER, it must consist exclusively of free content. This means that you should not use materials such as images, text passages, animations or other content that is not marked with a free license. If you use **CC-licensed materials**, make sure that they do not contain any restrictions such as the attribute ND (no editing), as this would limit reusability. If you use content for which you do not have the rights of use, be sure to obtain permission from the author or creator. In the case of images, logos, etc., the question of [Height of creation](#) is also crucial in determining whether the work is protected by copyright.
2. **Use open file formats:** The use of open file formats is crucial to promote the reusability and combinability of OER. Ensure that the materials you create are published in formats that are easily accessible and editable. Open file formats allow others to open and modify the materials

without difficulty. An **Open Data Format** is therefore more suitable for OER than static PDF files. Common open file formats include, for example, PDF/A, HTML, XML and various formats for text, audio and video.

Following these principles will help ensure that your OER are not only legally safe, but also more reusable and adaptable. This promotes the dissemination of OER and free access to educational materials. Creating an OER is similar to authoring any other document, except that you assign an open license to this content, which usually allows for free use and reuse by others.

Things to consider when creating:

What license will you assign to your OER? Using a Creative Commons license provides you with the legal framework to share your OER.

How will you make your OER accessible to all students? We recommend the [Open Education Consortium](#) guide to solving accessibility issues.

Where will you create and host your OER? There are websites from which you can upload and share your materials directly, and there are educational repositories specifically designed for creating and hosting OER.

How will you share your OER? Once you have created your OER, you may want to share them across many directories and repositories for maximum visibility. Consider submitting your work to MERLOT, OER Commons or the Open Textbook Library.

Providing OER

Making Open Educational Resources (OER) available requires some further important considerations and steps:

1. **License selection:** Carefully determine the license under which you wish to publish your materials. The [Licence generator](#) from Creative Commons can be very helpful here. Think about the usage rights you want to grant to others and choose the appropriate Creative Commons license. Make sure that the license is well understood and clearly reflects your intentions.
2. **Content adaptation:** Depending on your target audience, you may need to make content adjustments to your materials. If the materials are intended for a wide audience, additional explanations and instructions may be helpful to ensure that the information is easy to understand.
3. **Publication platform:** Consider where you would like to publish your OER. If your university has an OER repository, this could be a suitable platform for initial publication. However, there are also other platforms and portals where you can share OER. Make sure that the platform you choose provides an easy way to label your materials with the appropriate licenses.
4. **Metadata:** Provide your OER with comprehensive metadata so that they can be easily found. Metadata includes information such as the title, author, description, keywords and license. This information is crucial for other users to discover and properly use your OER.
5. **Versioning:** Remember that OER can be stored in different versions and in different places at the same time. This allows updates and improvements to be made without affecting older versions. Make sure that older versions are still available when you publish an updated version.

Further information on creating your own OER

More information and helpful hints can be found in the guides [Search and find OER](#) and [How-to guide: Using OER](#)

You will find a toolkit, e.g. on the [Una Europa](#) website. The Iowa State University has also created a series of videos and collections that provide all the important information step by step.



[Creating Open Educational Resources: Tips for New Creators](#) by Abbey Elder via YouTube is licensed under a [Creative Commons - BY 4.0 International \(CC BY 4.0\)](#).

— Note: This guide was created in collaboration with the [Project ValiDE](#). The materials were developed by ValiDE and transferred to the ZenDi Wiki by TEgoDi.

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