

Open Educational Resources (OER) Policy

1. Preamble

Open educational resources (OER) are seen as having great potential in the area of university teaching, for example in supporting methodological-didactic approaches, as well as in updating and further developing standardised and rapidly changing educational content and even in supporting individual teaching-learning processes.

OER also have potential in the area of education policy, as they have a positive impact on educational participation and the permeability of the education system. OER, thus, support the [fourth UN Sustainable Development Goal](#) by ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities.

2. Introduction

OER are part of the [strategy on education and digital transformation for the years 2018 to 2029](#) (in German only) and are covered in the context of the “sharing culture”. The ZHAW recommends the use of open educational resources (OER) and that they be adapted for the target audience in order to make the most of didactic synergies, content sharing and new perspectives. OER offer a constructive solution to copyright restrictions, particularly when it comes to the use of digital media. The ZHAW also encourages active participation in the sharing culture by producing OER. Sharing OER offers many potential benefits, including the following:

- Teaching staff can showcase their own expertise in a subject area.
- Efficiency is increased by using OER from others and duplication is avoided under a secure legal framework.
- By collaborating with other subject experts or students, educational resources can be updated, supplemented and developed.
- Educational resources are subject to quality control through peer review and community feedback.

This policy provides ZHAW staff with guidelines for the use of open educational resources during the initial phase. The iterative introduction of OER allows for knowledge to be gained in the active use of OER by third parties, to maintain OER and to support teaching staff in implementing OER.

3. Definition

OER are open educational resources, which the author deliberately designed to be open and provided with certain usage rights (so-called licences) to allow for ease of use, further processing and publication of it. Open educational resources include, for example, all types of course materials, texts, images, audio content, videos, learning software and complete courses.

According to UNESCO’s definition, 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.”¹ Here, the authors themselves determine which usage rights they grant and which they reserve.

¹ Source <https://en.unesco.org/themes/building-knowledge-societies/oer>

4. Production and licencing

If OER are (further) developed, specific OER quality aspects (e.g., content, target group, didactics, legal and formal criteria) must be checked by the author. ZHAW staff comply with the copyrights of third parties.

Educational resources are generally subject to copyright. In the case of copyright-protected educational resources that are created by university staff in the course of their work, the ZHAW holds the associated rights of use. The authors have, inter alia, the right to be named as such (§16(1) and §22(2) of the FaHG law governing the universities of applied sciences and arts).

The ZHAW expects its members of staff to publish their open educational resources under one of the following Creative Commons licences²:

- CC BY ([CC BY 4.0](#) John Smith, ZHAW)³: the educational resources may be used in full provided the name of the author is given.
- CC BY SA ([CC BY-SA 4.0](#) John Smith, ZHAW): the name of the author must be stated and the same licence must be used for distribution (i.e. "share alike").

If the interests of third parties are affected (e.g., contractual obligations) or legal restrictions are in place, further Creative Commons licences can be used.

5. Use

If OER are used, university staff are requested to adapt the educational resources for their own teaching context and the relevant target group. In doing so, the correct use and citing of the licences must be ensured (see Section 7: Annex to the regulations).

The [Information sheet on the CC licencing of OER](#) (in German only) must be observed when creating and using OER.

6. Contact

As your point of contact for general enquiries, questions relating to searching for and finding OER, the handling of third-party OER, matters relating to publishing, open access and licencing as well as repositories, the University Library is happy to assist you with any information you require (ZHAW University Library OER oer.hsb@zhaw.ch).

7. Annex to the regulations

Checklist for OER quality aspects: from planning to publishing:

Annex 1: [Z-CL-Checklist Open Educational Resources](#) (in German only)

² Creative Commons licences http://www.creativecommons.ch/wie-funktioniert/#cc_lizenzen (website in German)

³ The exact citation rules for OER are in accordance with the so-called [TULLU rule](#) (website in German) or TALLO: title, author, licence, link, origin.

8. Issued by

The original German version of the regulations can be found here:

[Z PY Policy Open Educational Resources.pdf](#)

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