



OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER) POLICY

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BACKCOCK UNIVERSITY POLICY ON OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OERs)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Open Educational Resources (OERs) are teaching, learning and research materials in various formats and media that reside in the public domain or are released under copyright of open licenses that permit no-cost access, re-use, re-purpose, adaptation and redistribution by others. OERs exist in various forms including videos, diagrams, animations, journals, open textbooks, course outlines, modules, experiments, graphics, among others.

The purpose of this policy is a compilation of the guidelines that will inform the development and use of OERs at BUCODEL and Babcock University. It serves as a useful guide through which tutors, learners, facilitators, librarians and other staff of the centre can enrich teaching and learning through OERs.

2.0 GOALS OF THE GUIDELINES

The goals of the guidelines are to:

- i. Provide framework for the operationalization of OER in BUCODEL and Babcock University;
- ii. Ensure the development and deployment of OER materials in BUCODEL and Babcock University are in consonance with the national vision and National Policy on Education and associated instruments;
- iii. Provide context and structure for the promotion and advancement of OER in BUCODEL and Babcock University;
- iv. Promote the philosophy and culture of OER in BUCODEL and Babcock University;
- v. Motivate research, scholarship and funding of OER in BUCODEL and Babcock University;
- vi. Encourage creativity, innovation, local contextualization in the development, adaptation and use of OER in BUCODEL and Babcock University;
- vii. Achieve localization of OERs in BUCODEL and Babcock University.

3.0 INSTITUTIONAL OER POLICY

This policy serves as the Institutional Policy of Babcock University and Babcock University Centre for Open Distance and e Learning (BUCODEL) on OER. It:

- i. Aligns with the National Policy on OER for Higher Education;
- ii. Underwent approval processes;
- iii. It is publicized and hosted on the BUCODEL website;
- iv. Highlights the uniqueness of BUCODEL in the creation, development and integration of OER in its academic activities.

4.0 ACCESSIBILITY

OERs are used to supplement textbooks, course materials and enhance course contents. OER has can reduce cost for both teachers and learners. Therefore, OERs developed and used in BUCODEL and Babcock University will be:

- i. Openly licensed. Using Creative Commons Licenses for Open resources;
- ii. Freely available and readily accessible. (No fee will be attached to access);
- iii. Modifiable: The resources will be made downloadable and allow for editing as much as possible;
- iv. Accessible to people with special needs.

5.0 LEARNERS' PARTICIPATION

Learners are major stakeholders in using OER as learning resources and therefore they have a vital role to play in shaping the quality of their education experiences. Therefore, BUCODEL and Babcock University will encourage learners' participation and engagement with OER through the following methods among others:

- i. Learners will give feedback of their perception and understanding of the use of OER;

- ii. E Tutors, facilitators and other staff will use the learners' feedback to improve OER materials developed, reused or adapted in teaching and learning;
- iii. Learners will be encouraged to publish their materials as OER under the guidance of their teachers;
- iv. Learners will be supported to seek and find OER for self-directed studies;
- v. Learners will be have access to institutions' OER repositorie(s);
- vi. Learners will be trained in locating and using OERs.

6.0 USE OF OER IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

E- tutors, Facilitators, teachers, staff and will:

- i. Develop skills in identifying and evaluating OER;
- ii. Ensure engagement of OER by learners;
- iii. Make OER resources an integral part of teaching and learning processes;
- iv. Provide links to relevant OER materials in course materials and learning resources;
- v. Nurture creativity, practical applications, discussions and research activities on OER;
- vi. Contextualise existing OER to respond to diverse learning needs of learners;
- vii. Engage in team work and collaboration in the use of OERs in teaching and learning;
- viii. Seek support for OER skills development;
- ix. Engage in dialogue about their teaching and learning experiences;
- x. Provide feedback about, and data on the use of, existing OER.

7.0 OER MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT

OER that fit the vision, mission, core values and goals of BUCODEL and Babcock University, while aligning with local context and national learning needs and which cater for the Nigerian eco system, protect the heritage and reflect the cultural context is germane. While existing OERs will be (re) used, adopted or repurposed, the development of indigenous relevant OER will be encouraged in BUCODEL and Babcock University. Therefore, BUCODEL and Babcock University will:

- i. Develop Institutional Protocols for the development and review of OER materials;

- ii. Integrate the goals of the CCMAS including creativity, critical thinking and innovation, employability and entrepreneurship in OER Material Development;
- iii. Develop institutional standardized formats for course materials;
- iv. Attract grants to support the development, adaptation and adoption of locally rich, high quality learning materials;
- v. Provide appropriate incentives and rewards to staff and students for the development, adaptation and adoption of locally rich high quality learning materials;
- vi. Ensure the publication of institutionally developed OER materials in the institution's repository;
- vii. Promote research on developing, using, reusing and repurposing OER;
- viii. Encourage collaboration both within and beyond Babcock University in developing materials.

8.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality Assurance is critical to ensuring the development and use of quality OERs. Therefore, BUCODEL and Babcock University will:

- i. Put in place internal quality assurance mechanisms and processes for validating OER materials developed, published and hosted in the institution's repositories;
- ii. Develop criteria for assessing the effectiveness of the integration of OER in teaching and learning and as an institutional practice;
- iii. Ensure that Quality Assurance professionals develop an understanding of OER;
- iv. Review the role and use of OER in improving the quality of teaching and learning;
- v. Review institutional quality assurance mechanisms periodically.

9.0 INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY

BUCODEL and Babcock University will:

- i. Provide adequate ICT infrastructure to support the use of OERs;

- ii. Ensure ICT access and connectivity for e-tutors, learners, facilitators, faculty, staff and students;
- iii. Provide software applications such as Web content editing tools, templates and toolkits to facilitate the creation and use of OERs;
- iv. Develop OER repository (ies);
- v. Develop ICT policies to accommodate the use of OERs;
- vi. Store, manage and share OERs;
- vii. Collaborate and form partnerships with other local, national and global networks and repositories based on open standards.

10.0 COMMITTEE ON OER

There will be a standing committee on OER that will:

- i. Coordinate the development of the Institutional OER Policy;
- ii. Synchronize capacity building and training;
- iii. Oversee the mainstreaming of OER in Babcock University;
- iv. Monitor the compliance of the use of OERs in line with global best practices.

11.0 REVIEW

Review ensures that OER is a high quality resource that is well-structured and suitable to be used by learners. Review provides critical input and suggestions which improve the quality of OER.

To this end BUCODEL and Babcock University will:

- i. Subject OER developed to a review process;
- ii. Create rubrics for the assessment and review of OER including subject matter, style and pedagogy;
- iii. Allow for open and post –publication review;
- iv. Make review processes open
- v. Recognize the role of reviewers.
- vi.

12.0 REPOSITORY CREATION

OER Institutional repositories support the location and use of resources. It also leads to improved adoption of OER, therefore BUCODEL and Babcock University will:

- i. Create institutional repository(ies) for OERs
- ii. Add OER compliant course materials as aspects of institutional repositories.
- iii. Facilitate the voluntary donation of OER compliant self-published materials by staff and students.
- iv. Upload the link to the institutional OER repositories on their website to improve visibility
- v. Classify the OERs to aid easy retrieval by the main users including teachers and learners
- vi. Ensure the OER repository comprises OER major themes – search; share; reuse and collaborate
- vii. Provide support tools that foster search, retrieval and sharing
- viii. Allow for the resources in the repository to be evaluated commented on and rated
- ix. Provide opportunities for self-publishers and corporate publishers, institutions, among others to convert hitherto proprietary licensed materials into OER.

13.0 ADVOCACY AND CAPACITY BUILDING

It is imperative to develop the capacity of all key stakeholders to create, access, re-use, re-purpose, adapt and redistribute OERs. Therefore, BUCODEL and Babcock University will:

- i. Undertake advocacy and capacity building and develop strategies for OER advocacy;
- ii. Embark on continuous awareness raising and trainings in OER and related matters and develop an OER training planner for year-on-year training;
- iii. Develop a wide range of competencies and expertise required for effective development and use of OER;
- iv. Create communities of practice and networks of OER experts;

- v. Promote programmes, workshops, capacity building, collaborations and research in OER;
- vi. Encourage a shared vision for OER practices that align with the institutions vision and mission;
- vii. Include OER publicity in matriculation and graduation publicity and events;
- viii. Appoint OER champions among staff and students to create greater awareness about OER;
- ix. Create a competitive recognition system for OER adoption;
- x. Integrate OER use into library induction for staff and students;
- xi. Incorporate OER training regime into staff resourcing and induction process;
- xii. Modify terms of employment to mandate OER licensing requirements for lecture notes, maps, course structure and such others that are amenable to OER categorization;
- xiii. Incentivize adoption through interfaculty prize system for OER adoption.

14.0 CULTURAL AND RELEGIOUS CONTEXT AND SENSITIVITY

Cultural sensitivity involves the awareness of the peculiar culture of a group of people and recognition of the cultural differences and similarities between people without assigning positive or negative values. Religious sensitivity includes respect for the faith values of various religious communities present within the target communities. While reflecting cultural and religious universals as part of globalisation, cultural and religious sensitivity will make OERs more relevant to the needs of learners and teachers within Babcock University system. Therefore, BUCODEL and Babcock University will:

- i. Ensure respect for religious and African cultural values;
- ii. Maintain Nigerian key contextual values in the development of OERs
- iii. Embed Nigerian culture specific features in OER contents (re)used, repurposed, or developed
- iv. Ensure cultural selectivity in the choice of OERs adopted or adapted

- v. Safeguard the Seventh Day Adventist faith in the development and choice of OERs used, adopted or developed.

15.0 INCLUSIVITY

OERs are meant to provide access to qualitative and inclusive education. In the face of existing barriers to inclusive education and the use of OER, BUCODEL and Babcock University will:

- i. Carry out baseline surveys to identify categories of disabilities in the institution;
- ii. Carry out an educational needs assessment in their institutions;
- iii. Provide adequate assistive devices and tools compatible with OERs;
- iv. Produce inclusive pedagogy in teaching and learning;
- v. Create awareness about issues of inclusive OER in teaching and learning;
- vi. Conduct trainings and acquisition of capacities and expertise to implement inclusive education;
- vii. Provide alternate texts to images, charts and figures instrumental to OER resources;
- viii. Ensure Video resources include transcriptions and closed captions;
- ix. Provide access to inclusive digital technology for learning.

16.0 LICENCING

Licensing is germane to ensuring legal compliance in the use, development, licensing and distribution of OERs. Therefore, BUCODEL and Babcock University will:

- i. Create flexible copyright policies;
- ii. Accommodate some-rights-reserved copyright or other licensing alternatives to be invoked when necessary;
- iii. Develop institutional process to ensure robust, enforceable IPR, copyright and privacy policies ;
- iv. Reflect OER conditions in legal and employment contracts;
- v. Update knowledge of IPR, copyright and privacy policies;
- vi. Ensure Academic staff understand the licensing policies and how it may affect their rights

17.0 MAINSTREAMING OER

Mainstreaming OER involves recognition of the benefits of OER, and the mobilization of various stakeholders in educational system. In view of this, BUCODEL and Babcock University will mainstream OER through:

- i. Providing support for the development and contextualizing OER policies;
- ii. Capacity building in OER;
- iii. Information dissemination and knowledge sharing about OERs;
- iv. Encouraging the creation of OERs as components of promotion and reward of staff;
- v. Developing recognition systems for developers of OERs, including learners and staff; and
- vi. Exploring OER initiatives and best practices

18.0 LANGUAGE AND MULTILINGUALISM

Language and Multilingualism play critical roles in the development to OER by promoting local ownership and cultural personalization of OERs when developed in local languages. To this end, BUCODEL and Babcock University will:

- i. Promote the development of OER in local and multilingual languages;
- ii. Develop policies that foster the development of OERs in local languages;
- iii. Encourage the development of OER in varied Nigerian languages for students;
- iv. Create repositories that store and share OERs in local Nigerian languages;
- v. Build capacities for staff in the development of local and multilingual OERs;
- vi. Provide seamless access to OERs developed in local languages;
- vii. Collaborate and partner with various sectors in the development of OER in varied Nigerian languages;
- viii. Ensure that those who develop OERs in local languages are recognised for sustainability;
- ix. Translate existing OERs into local languages.

19.0 ROLE OF LIBRARIANS IN OER

Librarians have the expertise and experience necessary to engage with OER, therefore librarians in BUCODEL and Babcock University will:

- i. Be involved in the creation of OER policy for the institution;
- ii. Remain flexible in supporting a variety of teacher and learners' needs in accessing OERs ;
- iii. Create awareness of available OERs in the library and repositories;
- iv. Assess the impact of their activities periodically;
- v. Contribute to the implementation of OER Guidelines and policies in Babcock University; and
- vi. Be involved in training and development in OER.

20.0 SOURCES OF OERs

OERs exist in various forms including videos, diagrams, animations, journals, open textbooks, course outlines, modules, experiments, graphics, among others. BUCODEl will source quality OERs from the following among others:

Open Textbook libraries

Open Textbooks from OER Commons

OpenStax Textbooks

Open Access Journals

Open Library

Edunet

21.0 CONCLUSION

With the adoption and implementation of OER in BUCODEL and Babcock University at large, learners and teachers will have free access to a wide variety of high quality flexible educational resources in many formats that have been collaboratively developed, reviewed, revised, and can be shared across institutions. The implementation of this policy and guidelines will enable an ever-widening community of learners in BUCODEL and Babcock University to reach their academic, professional and personal goals.