Guideline for Open Educational Resources (OER)

(short: OER-Policy)

published in the Bulletin No. 11 Academic Year 2024/25 on 03.12.2024

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1   Preamble

Open educational resources (OER) with high-quality content and didactics can make a significant contribution to quality assurance and democratization of studying and teaching. These can also be used freely outside the university in other educational institutions and can therefore also be seen as a contribution to the third mission of a university. In particular, the challenges associated with digitally supported teaching show the need to make teaching and learning materials flexible, open, accessible, legally secure and sustainable. OER teaching/learning materials are made freely available and can therefore be used under legally unambiguous conditions.

Educational resources that are available under a Creative Commons (CC) license as an open content license can be used by third parties free of charge, subject to compliance with the conditions described in the license, for example the attribution of the author. From BOKU University's perspective, the following reasons speak in favour of developing and promoting OER (see also Forum Neue Medien Austria, 2016 and 2023):

1. OER support and enable open teaching and learning scenarios.
2. OER create the opportunity for access to free knowledge and open exchange, and can therefore be seen as part of the "third mission".
3. OER support lifelong learning.
4. OER enable increased collaboration in the education sector.
5. OER provide support for copyright issues in teaching.
6. OER serve to visualize high-quality teaching at the university and its lecturers.
7. OER promote inclusion, especially if they are designed to be accessible.
8. OER can be part of the sustainable quality assurance of teaching.

In the 2019-2021 (BOKU and BMBWF, 2018) and 2022-2024 (BOKU and BMBWF, 2021) performance agreements, BOKU University (hereinafter BOKU) committed itself to creating and publishing OER materials. For the LV 2022-2024, the creation of an OER repository was planned in order to make the OER materials available through an interface via the OER Hub Austria. Based on a rectorate resolution dated 01.08.2023, a joint repository for Open Educational Resources (OER) and research data created by BOKU employees as part of studies and projects is now being set up. The repository is based on InvenioRDM, an open source solution, and will be available in 2027 enabling access to the content in accordance

with the FAIR principles (Wilkinson et al., 2016). It was also decided to become a member of the DOI Service Austria in order to be able to assign unique Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) for OER and other BOKU content.

This policy describes BOKU's position regarding OER, clarifies the procedure for the creation and publication of OER and refers to specific support services for users and creators of OER at BOKU.

2 Scope of application

2.1 People and staff

In accordance with the BOKU Affiliation Policy, this guideline applies to all academic and non-academic general staff at BOKU as well as to retired university professors, retired university lecturers and all students. It also applies to visiting researchers, research fellows and employees of strategic BOKU holdings, provided they belong to a BOKU working group. It also applies to former scientific and non-scientific staff of BOKU who, after moving to another institution, complete and publish work started at BOKU.

2.2 Open Educational Resources (OER)

OER are teaching/learning materials that are made freely accessible with the help of corresponding Creative Commons (CC) licenses. Depending on the license used, OER can be reproduced, used, modified, combined and distributed without having to obtain permission from the creators. According to UNESCO (2019) OER are defined as "learning, teaching and research materials in any format and medium that are in the public domain or published under an open license that permits free access, reuse, modification and republication by others". The Creative Commons licenses CC0, CC BY and CC BY-SA are therefore considered as open licenses (see Forum Neue Medien Austria, 2016).

OER can take many different forms and are not limited to digital formats. Possible forms include digital images, texts, presentations, worksheets, test tasks, scripts, books, videos, music, entire online courses or even analogue materials to illustrate scientific teaching content. BOKU sees OER as an important part of studying and teaching, as well as the dissemination of modern teaching content outside the university ("third mission"). OER enable free access to education, promote the use and exchange of teaching/learning materials, expand the didactic possibilities, support the development of skills (among

teachers and students), increase the visibility of teaching performance and allow copyright-clear (re-)use.

2.3 BOKU position and recommendation

BOKU supports national and international efforts to promote OER and thus contributes to strengthening efforts for high-quality open educational resources, which also serve to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 (Quality in education: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, see UNESCO, 2019).

BOKU cooperates with other Austrian universities in setting up its own OER repository for the storage of OER and with regard of its connection to the OER Hub Austria.

In addition to the primary goal of providing high-quality materials, the OER repository also supports the transparent and positive presentation of high-quality BOKU teaching materials to the outside world.

BOKU therefore recommends that all university members (students, teaching staff and all employees) use, create and publish OER on the premise that the free educational materials are for education and teaching and comply with scientific and didactic standards. BOKU supports its members in the use, creation and publication of OER in the form of advisory services, further training opportunities and the provision of information material.

2.4 Temporal scope of application

This guideline was adopted at the meeting of the Rectorate on 26.11.2024 and comes into force on 03.12.2024.

This policy is reviewed for validity every two years by the management of BOKU University.

3 Safeguarding the rights of third parties and the university

When using, creating and publishing OER, university members are responsible for observing the legal framework for the use of third-party works or parts of works, even in the case of partial or co-authorship of jointly created OER.

The use, creation and publication of OER is always carried out with respect for <u>BOKU's reputation and mission statement "Teaching and Learning"</u>. BOKU reserves the right to remove OER published in its repositories if they are not compatible with this policy, other

guidelines or the mission statement of BOKU or do not meet the quality standards set out in the terms of use of the repositories. The right is also reserved to demand the deletion of OER in external repositories or to prohibit any connection to BOKU University in the materials if BOKU's legitimate interests are violated.

4 Notes on implementation and support

4.1 Recommendations for OER publication, licensing and implementation

Until the BOKU's own OER repository is available, it is recommended to use other existing repositories that allow CC licenses, such as BOKU-Community on Zenodo. Photos can also be made available on the BOKU Flickr area. When using repositories, the respective terms of use and licensing conditions must be considered.

It is recommended to license the created OER directly with the help of a Creative Commons license, preferably using the licenses "CC BY" and "CC BY-SA". In accordance with the Creative Commons regulations, the license should include the following components: "Title of the OER", attribution of authorship (whereby persons, institutes, departments as well as projects can be named individually and/or in combination, see implementation examples), naming the license including the version used, a link to the license text (the license image can also be added) and, for online materials, a direct link to the license text (URL), place of origin (in the case of a digital resource a URL or DOI, in the case of physical resources the location where the OER can be found).

When publishing, the OER are enriched with meaningful metadata (see Menzel, 2020), and in accordance with the BOKU Affiliation Policy, the institution and address are specified in the metadata of the repository, and finally provided with a persistent identifier. All OER created at BOKU using university resources need to mention "BOKU University" in the licensing notice.

Example implementation 1 (short version):

"Title of the OER". Surname and first name of the authors, (alternatively or additionally: institute, department; if desired also: project), BOKU University. CC BY 4.0, place of origin (URL/DOI, or physical location).

"Title of the OER". First and last name of the authors (alternatively or additionally: institute, department; if desired also: project), BOKU University. CC BY-SA 4.0, place of origin (URL/DOI, or physical location).

Example implementation 2 (long version):

"Title of the OER". Surname and first name of the authors, (alternatively or additionally: institute, department; if desired also: project), BOKU University. Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.de, place of origin (URL/DOI, or physical location).

"Title of the OER". Surname and first name of the authors, (alternatively or additionally: institute, department; if desired also: project), BOKU University. Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/legalcode.de), place of origin (URL/DOI, or physical location).

4.2 Support services for users and creators

BOKU has strategically anchored the topic of OER in the Vice-Rectorate for Teaching, Continuing Education and Students. Contact persons for OER are located in the Teaching Development Service Unit, Didactics Department. This service unit develops information materials, offers advice, training and other activities to promote OER. BOKU offers the following support services to all university members who wish to use, create and/or publish OER:

- Information material on the use, creation and publication of OER
- Individual OER consultations
- Support in the creation of free educational materials
- OER training opportunities
- Provision of a technical infrastructure in the form of an OER repository for the publication of OER with a connection to the OER Hub Austria

5 Licensing of the BOKU OER Policy

This document is based on the two OER policies of TU Graz and the University of Innsbruck:

TU Graz (2020) "Guideline on open educational resources at Graz University of Technology (OER-Policy)", URL:

https://www.tugraz.at/fileadmin/user_upload/tugrazExternal/02bfe6da-df31-4c20-9e9f-819251ecfd4b/2020_2021/Stk_5/RL_OER_Policy_24112020.pdf (letzter Abruf Mai 2024).

University of Innsbruck (2022) "Open Educational Resources Policy of the University of Innsbruck", URL: https://www.uibk.ac.at/media/filer_public/56/04/5604fd72-a697-4e34-a74e- cd4cf4699bf0/oerpolicy_universitat_innsbruck.pdf, also published in the Mitteilungsblatt on 26.04.2022

(https://www.uibk.ac.at/universitaet/mitteilungsblatt/2021-2022/32.html#h2-3) (last accessed May 2024).

6 References

Forum Neue Medien in der Lehre Austria (fnma) (2016). Empfehlungen für die Integration von Open Educational Resources an Hochschulen in Österreich. Mitarbeit im Arbeitskreis: Ebner, M., Freisleben-Teutscher, C., Gröblinger, O., Kopp, M., Rieck, K., Schön, S., Seitz, P., Seissl, M., Ofner, S. & Zwiauer, C.. Graz: Forum Neue Medien in der Lehre Austria, URL: https://fnma.at/content/download/1432/4903.

Forum Neue Medien in der Lehre Austria (fnma) (2023). Zum Stand von Open Educational Resources (OER) an österreichischen Hochschulen. Hrsg. Sandra Schön, Reinhard Tockner und Martin Ebner. Graz: Forum Neue Medien in der Lehre Austria, URL: https://www.fnma.at/content/download/2671/16104.

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BOKU und BMBWF (2018). Leistungsvereinbarungen 2019-2022. URL: https://boku.ac.at/fileadmin/data/H01000/mitteilungsblatt/MB_2018_19/MB04/H-Universitaet_fuer_Bodenkultur_Wien.pdf (letzter Zugriff am 30.04.2024).

BOKU und BMBWF (2021). Leistungsvereinbarungen 2022-2024. URL: https://boku.ac.at/fileadmin/data/H01000/mitteilungsblatt/MB_2021_22/MB06/BOKU_LV_2022-2024_abgeschlossen.pdf (letzter Zugriff am 30.04.2024).

Wilkinson, M.D et al. (2016). The FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship. Scientific Data 3, 160018. 10.1038/sdata.2016.18.

7 History

Version	Amendment	from	decided on	published
Version 1.0	Creation of the final version on 11.11.2024	H11210 / Zitek, Strauss-Sieberth H13000 / Hikl, Miechtner H10090 / Korp	26.11.2024	on 03.12.2024 in the Newsletter no. 11 Academic year 2024/25