



OER Guidance for Schools

Open Educational Resources (OER) are learning resources that have been openly licensed, and can be used for free. For OER, clear permission has been provided up front so that school staff, and anyone else, can use these resources to best suit their teaching aims, as well as the needs of their learners.

Globally, educators are working to make, share and promote OER. The OER Guidance for Schools was commissioned by Leicester City Council, and is part of the DigiLit Leicester project. The Guidance aims to support school staff in understanding and making use of open licensing, and creating and sharing their own OER.

The OER Guidance for Schools is available at <http://schools.leicester.gov.uk/openeducation> and at <http://oer.educ.cam.ac.uk/wiki/OERGS>. It consists of four documents, as well as a range of supporting materials. The main four Guidance documents (G1-G4) are:

- **G1 Open Education and the Schools Sector** - this covers OER, open education, OER freedoms and benefits of OER to schools.
- **G2 Understanding Open Licensing** - this addresses copyright, fair dealing, different types of Creative Commons licences and the public domain.
- **G3 Finding and remixing openly licensed resources** - this looks at search engines, OER sites, attribution and creating new resources legally by 'remixing' and making use of existing work that has been shared under Creative Commons licences.
 - **G4 Openly Licensing and Sharing your Resources** - this provides information on OER school policies and processes, applying an open licence and ways of sharing OER.

The Guidance is released under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence (CC BY 4.0), so that it can be shared and adapted openly, as long as attribution is given. Each document is available in a range of formats, to make accessing, using and remixing them as easy as possible: PDF (with a graphic design), and Word/OpenOffice (without the graphic design, but all text and images, for easy editing). An archive file with the InDesign files and other graphic files is also available. All files (and various zip archives) can be accessed from the above URLs.

Alongside the four Guidance documents, there are a number of supporting documents (S1-S6):

- **S1 OER Activities for Workshops, the Classroom, and for Self-study** - a longer document, with a large range of activities for different settings; some activities are fairly structured, others are open ended; each activity in that document refers to one or more Guidance documents (G1-G4).

Detailed guides (“step-by-step walk-throughs”) are available to supplement those activities, as well as Guidance 3:

- **S2 Remixing with Images** - finding and using Creative Commons licensed images via the Creative Commons search and Flickr;
- **S3 Remixing with Shakespeare** - remixing text from different sources;
- **S4 Remixing with Wikipedia Text and Images** - using wikipedia text and images;
- **S5 Share-Alike, NonCommerical, and Public Domain** - detailed information about adapting Share-Alike content, some information on NonCommercial, and the public domain;
- **S6 References and Links** to further resources - lists sites with OER, (school-specific and general), search engines, OER support, videos for learning about OER, MOOCs, and a lot of further reading at various levels.

There are also a number of additional documents created by other organisations that are needed for some of the activities in supplementary document S1. The list of files needed is included in that document. For convenience, we have also bundled these additional files into a zip file, available from above URLs.

The Guidance advocates the remixing of OER to create new OER; the documents themselves have been remixed using a range of other openly licensed resources, which are credited in the acknowledgements section of each document. Therefore, the OER Guidance both advocates and models OER practice. Guidance 1 (Open Education and the Schools Sector) advocates the three OER freedoms as complementary features; the Guidance documents themselves embody those three OER freedoms as follows:

Legal freedom. The OER Guidance documents are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution licence, which means that they are “legally free”, and in particular meet the definition for “free cultural works”. The Creative Commons Attribution licence meets the EU directives for publicly funded content.

Technical freedom. The Guidance documents are available for download, as pdf, and can be printed. When laying out the document, we paid attention to readability and carried out basic accessibility checks. The documents are also available as Word and OpenOffice documents, which are easier to edit. Images used in this Guidance are also available alongside the documents as separate files. Zip archives for bulk download are provided.

We have also included the InDesign documents. These aren’t something that all readers will be interested in using, but allow the documents to be adapted to produce updated PDFs using the InDesign documents (and graphics) provided.



Educational freedom. In addition to producing the four Guidance documents, we thought about how OER use can be practically supported in school. We've included workshop and classroom ideas, as well as "walk-throughs". To enable readers to take part in discussion of the documents, we've also placed copies on a public wiki site (<http://oer.educ.cam.ac.uk/wiki/OERGS>). This wiki uses the same software as Wikipedia, which enables users to comment on them, as well as develop and adapt them.

Leicester City Council has taken the visionary step to give permission to the 84 community and voluntary controlled schools across the city to engage with the three freedoms, by creating and sharing OER. This permission makes sharing resources simpler for everyone, and provides additional opportunities for schools and school staff.

Shortly after the guidance was published, it was also taken up the Africa Virtual University, for use during teacher education workshops. As an outcome, French and Portuguese translations are now available.

We hope that you will find these materials easy to use, and that they will help to support schools in getting started with producing OER, and ultimately foster a culture of creating and sharing OER as part of everyday practice. We're very happy to engage with teachers in implementing OER, so please do contact us with any questions you may have. We are hoping to collaborate on future versions of the Guidance, and will post updates and answers to frequently asked questions at the URLs provided above.

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The OER Guidance for Schools documents are available from <http://schools.leicester.gov.uk/openeducation>.

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