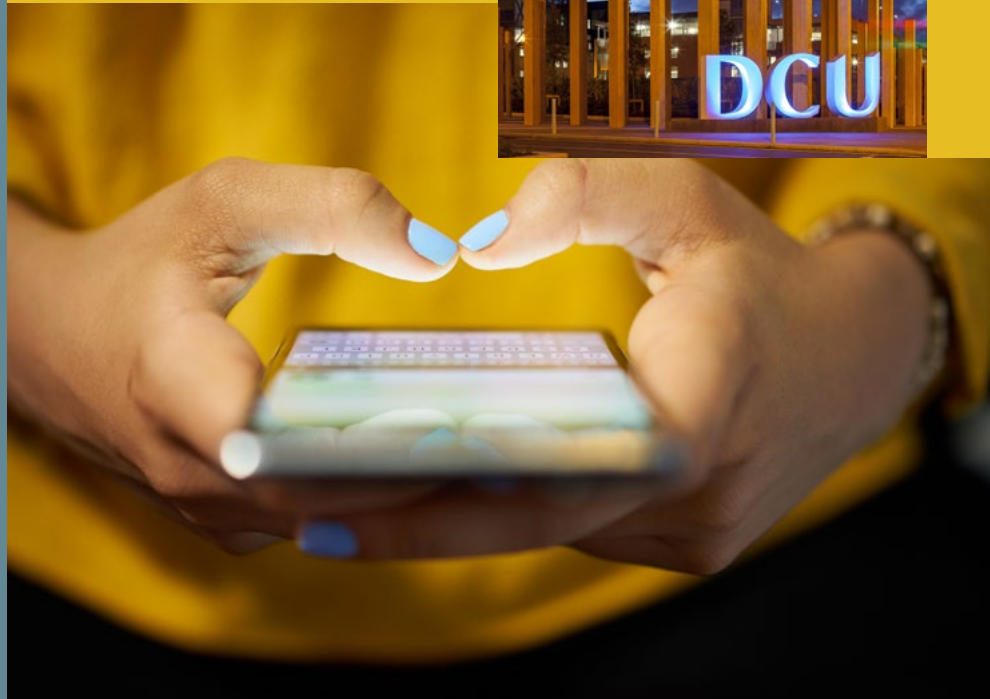




Ollscoil Chathair
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Go Open: A beginners guide to open education

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NATIONAL FORUM
FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING
AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION



The Go Open Project is funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and Dublin City University's (DCU) Teaching Enhancement Unit through the SATLE 19 fund.



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Introduction

In this short guide, we aim to give you an introduction to the area of open education, so that you can engage with open education practices in your teaching and support activities and to Go Open!

The guide is structured around five key questions about going open:

1. What is open education?
2. What are open teaching and learning practices?
3. What is Creative Commons licensing? And How do I use it?
4. What are OER?
5. How do I find and use open resources?

Each section gives a short definition of the key concept, some analysis of the literature and some examples and resources of open education practice for you to engage with in more detail. This guide was created by the Go Open team based in Dublin City University.

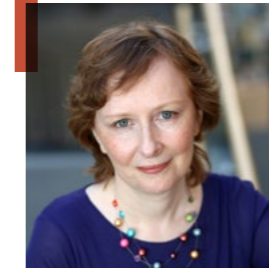
About the Go Open project

The Go Open project is a collaborative project based in Dublin City University (DCU) and comprises of team members from DCU Library, Open Education Unit and the Digital Learning Design Unit. This digital resource (**Go Open: A Beginners Guide to Open Education**) aims to support the DCU Community to engage with open education practices in their teaching and support activities. The Go Open Project is funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and DCU's Teaching Enhancement Unit through the SATLE 19 fund.

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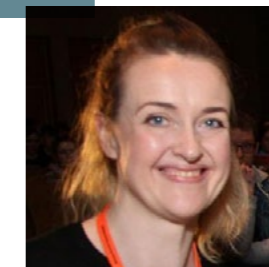
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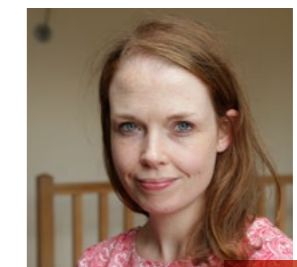
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What is open education?

Open education is a philosophy that believes “everyone should have the freedom to use, customize, improve and redistribute educational resources without constraint” (Cape Town Open Education Declaration, 2012). Fundamental to the open philosophy is that higher education is a public good, therefore the knowledge produced by universities should be freely accessible and openly available to everyone (Weller, 2014). Engaging with openness in higher education directly links to the UN Sustainable Development goal 4 - Quality Education, as open education can democratize and increase access to education and knowledge (UNESCO, 2019).

“Openness its key attribute is about freedom – for individuals to access content, to reuse it in ways they see fit, to develop new methods of working and to take advantage of the opportunities the digital, networked world offers”

(Weller, 2014)



Photo by OpenClipart-Vectors from Pixabay

Openness comes in many forms and encompasses a number of interrelated practices, terms and approaches in the higher education context (Costello, Huijser, Marshall, 2019). These include open educational resources underpinned by creative commons licensing and open teaching and learning practices. In the sections below we will outline the what, how and why of each of these open education concepts.

What are open teaching and learning practices?

Open teaching and learning or open pedagogy is the integration of open practices, open educational resources and assessment approaches into education. There are diverse views on the definitions of open pedagogy and open educational practices; David Wiley frames open pedagogy as the integration of open educational resources:

“OER-enabled pedagogy is the set of teaching and learning practices only possible or practical when you have permission to engage in the 5R activities”

(Wiley, 2017)

Other commentators such as Susan Koseoglu (2017), take a broader perspective and view open pedagogy as a philosophy of teaching and learning centred around social justice and sharing.

The Open Psych blog illustrates an online and open pedagogy assignment undertaken by students of an educational psychology module at Dublin City University. Following the open pedagogy principle of empowering students to create and share information, the module team, Dr James Brunton @DrjamesBrunton and Megan Gaffney (Dublin City University, Ireland) designed an assignment that supported students to produce a communication that is openly shared with the public. The student-designed resources are available at: <https://openpsych.home.blog>

In practical terms, open pedagogy can involve using open educational resources such as an open textbook in your teaching. It can include creating assignments that are not disposable but that contribute to public knowledge, for example through student created blogs or editing Wikipedia (National Forum, 2020; Jhangiani & DeRosa, n.d.). These forms of assessment are authentic and can enable students to develop their digital competencies and communication skills.

What are OER?

Resources and examples

Equity Unbound <http://unboundeq.creativitycourse.org/>

Equity Unbound provides resources to University learners and staff who wish to explore digital literacies that focus on equity and intercultural awareness. A collection of multimedia-based collaborative lessons and activities are available, that cover themes including empathy and bias, equity and fake news.

Originally created by Maha Bali [@bali_maha](#) (American University in Cairo, Egypt), Catherine Cronin [@catherinecronin](#) (National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Ireland), and Mia Zamora [@MiaZamoraPhD](#) (Kean University, NJ, USA) for their own course settings, the resources are now available to all. Contributions are invited and can be submitted through the website.

Open Pedagogy <http://openpedagogy.org/>

Open Pedagogy was developed by Rajiv Jhangiani [@thatpsychprof](#) (Kwantlen Polytechnic University, British Columbia, Canada) and Robin DeRosa [@actualham](#) (Plymouth State University, NH, USA), as a way for educators and students to present their experiences of implementing and experimenting with open education. The website invites contributions that demonstrate open education in practice. The site is displayed as an 'Open Education Notebook', and currently hosts various examples from the University sector, including open assignments, textbooks and student reflections.

The term OER means open educational resources and are defined by UNESCO (2019) as “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”

OER can support any form of teaching and learning. The key difference between OER and other educational resources is their licence, which facilitates reuse, and often adaptation, without first requesting permission. The use of open licensing, called Creative Commons, facilitates the open sharing and reuse of open educational resources, which is described by **David Wiley as the 5 Rs of open:**

- Retain: you can make and own copies of the resource
- Reuse: you can use the resource in your own context
- Revise: you can adapt, modify, translate and improve the resource
- Remix: you can combine and recombine the resource with other material
- Redistribute: you can share the resource with others” (National Forum, 2020, p.2)



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Image Source: Go Open Project

What is Creative Commons licensing? And How do I use it?

Creative Commons licenses are a way to give public permission to use creative work in a manner that protects intellectual property under copyright law (Creative Commons, 2019).

Whilst both the public domain and open licence (**Creative Commons**) permit free access to materials, the scope and nature of each is different. Works in the public domain do not/no longer belong to anybody. Most material enters the public domain when copyright expires, or when creators purposely waive their copyright ownership, dedicating their work to the public domain via a Creative Commons 'zero' licence (CC0). In this case, the public has a right to reproduce and distribute the work as they wish, without acknowledgement of the original author. This is the purest form of open access as no one person owns the work. This is not common in educational practice.

In contrast, open licence occurs where the author of a work retains ownership and copyright but explicitly grants specific permissions with regard to reproduction and distribution by the public. They can also restrict commercial activity, and can prevent adaptation if required. The adoption of this type of licence is becoming increasingly prevalent in educational institutions throughout North America and Canada and is commonly referred to as an OER.

In summary, an open licence recognises and protects ownership of intellectual property while allowing others to use the work in a timely and efficient manner. The following table illustrates the differences between public domain, open licence and all rights reserved copyright:

Public Domain	Open License	All Rights Reserved Copyright
Copyright ownership is waived	Copyright ownership is retained	Copyright ownership is retained
Author gives away rights to the public to reproduce and distribute creative work.	Author grants broad rights to the public to reproduce and distribute creative work.	Author does not grant rights to the public.
"It is not mine. I give up my right as an author. You don't even have to cite me although I would appreciate it."	"It is mine. But I do allow you to take my material. No need to ask for my permission to use it because it is already granted. Just ensure to make a proper attribution to me."	"It is mine. I do not allow you to take this material and re-purpose it. You definitely need to ask my permission to use it."

Source: (Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, 2021)

How open OER are, depends on how they are licenced for use. The most common form of open licence is a Creative Commons licence.

With all Creative Commons licences (except CC0), authors retain copyright over their work while agreeing, through the licence, for the work to be shared. They can also restrict commercial activity, and can prevent adaptation if required. Authors may stipulate when any or all of the following conditions apply:

1. No commercial use allowed
2. Use as is: no derivatives allowed
3. Share alike: give derivative the same licence
4. Attribution required (this is required by all CC licences, except CC0)

There are 6 CC conditional licences to choose from:



1. CC BY: this licence allows other people to distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon the licenced work, even commercially, as long as they credit you, the author, for the original creation.
2. CC BY-SA: this licence allows other people to distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon the licenced work, even commercially, as long as they credit the author for the original creation, and licence their new creation under identical terms.

CC0, CC BY and CC BY-SA are the most 'open' CC licences.



3. CC BY-ND: this licence allows other people to redistribute, commercially and non-commercially, as long as the original work is passed along unchanged and whole, with credit given to the author.
4. CC BY-NC: this licence allows other people to remix, tweak, and build upon a work non-commercially. Their new work must also acknowledge the author of the original work and be non-commercial, but they don't have to licence their derivative work(s) under the same terms.
5. CC BY-NC-SA: this licence allows other people to remix, tweak, and build upon a work non-commercially, as long as they credit the original author of the work, and licence their new creation under identical terms.
6. CC BY-NC-ND: this licence allows other people to download a work and share it with others as long as they credit the original author of the work, but they can't change the work in any way, or use it commercially.

(Creative Commons, 2019)

Why use OER?

According to Butcher (2015, p.13) one of the main reasons to use OER is to 'build on common intellectual capital, rather than duplicating similar efforts'. Additionally, at its best, OER provides students and educators with access to high quality learning materials at low or no cost. This is very important in a climate where as a result of the Covid pandemic, there have been reports of eBooks costing up to 500% more than in print (Fazackerley, 2021). The use of OER can help reduce the increasing dependence on specific textbooks. Many textbook publishers are offering online assessment materials that can only be purchased via the publisher. For example, an undergraduate textbook might have student resources aligned to it and in order to access these, each student is required to purchase a new copy of the textbook.

Benefits of using OER

Cost savings

- Financial savings associated with adoption of OER are documented – to date, for example, in the context of textbooks, BCCampus has reported over \$20 million in student savings (BCCampus, 2020)
- Large benefit to the students who are often short of funds and cannot afford to purchase expensive texts.

Remove barriers to access

- The main purpose of Open Education is to remove access barriers to Higher Education (HE) so that everyone has an equitable chance to successfully complete a HE credential.
- Barriers to HE access include: cost, entry requirements, flexibility (to accommodate diversity), content, courses, support, assessment, and accreditation.
- OER open up access to information, knowledge, and learning resources. As such they are enablers of continuous professional development (CPD) and lifelong learning. They can reduce the costs of learning resources for students and institutions.
- Nevertheless, engaging with openness in higher education directly links to the UN Sustainable Development goal 4 - based on its key pillars of access: equity, equality, quality, and inclusion (UNESCO, 2019). A holistic strategy combining different elements of open may 'have the potential to reconfigure the way higher education is realised' (Dos Santos, Punie, Castaño-Muñoz, 2016, p. 30).

How do I find and use open resources?

Facilitation of wider world view

- A recognition that knowledge is inevitably marked by power relations and an attempt to readjust these dynamics.
- Contributes to the decolonisation movement within higher education by providing opportunities to decolonise and diversify curriculum resources (Arday, Belluigi & Thomas, 2020; Costello, 2020; Farley, 2019).

Increase student agency and engagement

- By opening up assessment and student learning opportunities to real world contexts through open education practices, students gain agency over their learning. This could be done through co-producing content with your students and creating a shared OER.
- A large study was done in 2018 within the University of Georgia, assessing the impact of OER on 21,000 students over a multi-year period. Results found that on average student grades improved and this was partly attributed to continual textbook access from day one (Colvard, Watson & Park, 2018)

Altruism

- In the case of public universities, they are established to provide public good – higher education – and as such are a public good themselves. Therefore, equipping students with the means to improve society is its highest goal. OER facilitate this process.
- It's less about saving money, and more about removing barriers so that students have early and continuous access to course materials.

So you like the idea of using some existing open resources in your teaching, but how do you find these open resources and ensure that they are right for your students in terms of content and quality? In short there are many different websites and repositories (places that other educators have made resources they developed openly available) that house collections of open educational resources, which may include any kind of instructional material such as teaching and learning documents, images, videos, textbooks, or even whole courses.

A 5-Step Process



Image Source: Go Open Project

Finding Open Resources

The first thing to recognise when talking about how to find open resources is that, like any kind of research activity, it will take time and persistence to accomplish and will be more difficult at first until you develop some experience with this activity.

It may be easier to identify what the problem is you would like to solve first, rather than wade into a sea of websites and repositories. Do you want to find an open textbook to replace a costly commercial textbook? Or do you want to find an open data set for students to analyse as part of an assessment? Having this kind of focus for your search may make things easier.

During the 2020-21 academic year, a faculty member in DCU Business School referred to brief sections of an OER textbook- [Principles of Economics](#) when teaching a first-year undergraduate introduction Economics module. Reasons included:

- Reduce student expense
- Option to directly link to relevant sections
- Handles material well for the most part
- Additional support for student learning

Another thing to recognise is that there may be others who can aid you in your search for appropriate open resources. We recommend you make contact with a librarian in your institution who will be able to advise and guide you to the best resources. Talk to colleagues to see if they have found open resources similar to what you are searching for.

Having identified your goal and getting any guidance you can, you then need to begin locating and exploring websites and repositories, keeping track of your efforts. Early explorations will give you an overview of the type of content you can find in such locations. It is a good idea to begin searching broadly before narrowing your search. Here are some well known repositories to get you started:

OER Commons	Open Textbook Library	BCCampus
Teaching Commons	Merlot	OASIS
Openstax	Lumen Learning	EdTech Books

How do I evaluate OER?

While the adoption of OER may prove beneficial, the normal practice of critical evaluation is even more important. In the context of textbooks, for example, the publisher is responsible for conducting a rigorous editing and proof-reading process to ensure a high standard of quality, usability, accessibility and accuracy.

The decision to adopt an OER places the responsibility on you to ensure the quality, integrity, usability, accessibility and accuracy of the resources for teaching and learning purposes. You must be confident that the OER will meet the teaching and learning goals and objectives.

Evaluation methods vary and include: a crowd-sourcing approach where users rate the text, analysis of usage logs to identify patterns, and the adoption of quality rubrics. In relation to the latter, rubrics designed to evaluate OER quality often consist of several dimensions or indicators, with each dimension or indicator measuring one aspect of OER quality. Research has examined various rubrics including ACHIEVE OER, LORI and GEM and identified a range of quality indicators which provide a useful framework for analysis (Yuan & Recker, 2019). Such indicators include:

- Quality of explanation of subject matter
- Quality of instructional practice and exercises
- Accuracy
- Clarity
- Appropriateness
- Learning goal alignment
- Reusability

Using Open Resources

Once you have found some promising resources you have to evaluate them, which some repositories will help with by including reviews from others, while others will leave it to you to make your own assessment. Depending on your goals you may then be able to incorporate the resource into your teaching in a straightforward way, for example by linking to an open textbook in a reading list, or you may engage in more complicated processes such as adapting a resource to your specific context and/or need. You will need to check the Creative Commons licence related to any resource to know what you can legitimately do with that open resource. You may also need to develop your ability to aid others in working with open resources and developing associated competencies, for example where you have students engage with open resources such as open data sets.

Digital Humanities Librarian Liam O'Dwyer provides workshops on tools like OpenRefine and Git for DCU staff and researchers based on [the Carpentries](#), a suite of lessons on essential data and coding skills for different audiences such as researchers and information professionals. The lesson contents are all [published on Github with a CC-BY licence](#). They can be reused in their original form for branded [Carpentries](#) workshops (by a certified instructor, like Liam), or adapted and customised for [Carpentries-based](#) workshops (by anyone).

Sharing Open Resources

Do not forget to share both the resources you have found and your experiences of finding, evaluating, and using open resources with others such that you can make them aware of the utility of open resources and make their explorations in that regard easier. These may be your immediate colleagues or others further afield where you share your experiences through blogging, social media posts. You could deposit your resources in a repository such as [Github](#), [Zenodo](#), [OER commons](#), the [OER world map](#), or in your local repository, where available.

Resources

A toolkit by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (2019) includes a [4-step guide to openly licencing your work](#)

The [Creative Commons license wizard](#), is a quick and easy online tool to help you select the correct Creative Commons licence for your needs.

Athlone Institute of Technology [OER subject index](#)

Examples

[#Openteach](#): Professional Development for Open Online Educators. [#Openteach](#) is a National Forum funded project which aims to generate new knowledge about effective online teaching practice, and support the professional learning of online educators. The project has produced a number of OER to support the enhancement of teaching and learning.

[OpenGame Project Resources](#) – Resources include Handbook of Successful Open Teaching Practices CC BY-NC-ND and Course Curriculum/Content CC BY-NC-SA; OpenGame is an Erasmus+ project aiming to produce an educational game promoting the use of OER and OEP

[EDTL Approach \(Irish Universities Association\)](#) – The EDTL Approach was the Enhancing Digital Teaching and Learning project's response to the Covid-19 crisis, collaborating across seven universities to produce a set of open resources to support effective remote teaching.

Why Go Open?

Four Reasons to Go Open

- 1 Save money for your students
- 2 Bring real world examples into your teaching
- 3 Save time by reusing existing resources
- 4 Contribute to broadening access to education

How to Go Open?

Four Ways to Go Open

- 1 Share your open practice
- 2 Deposit your work in open repositories
- 3 Use Creative Commons licensing
- 4 Use open educational resources



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