

What is the WikiEducator?

WikiEducator is a website that provides free eLearning content that anyone can edit and use.

WikiEducator was launched by COL and piloted in August 2006 at the first course developers meeting for the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC). It is now being used around the world extensively for the development of free educational resources.

The WikiEducator is an evolving community focussed on collaboration in:

- ▶ planning of education projects linked with the development of free content
- ▶ development of free content on WikiEducator for eLearning
- ▶ building of open education resources (OERs) on how to create OERs
- ▶ networking on funding proposals developed as free content

www.WikiEducator.org



An open invitation

Everyone is free to participate in WikiEducator, all you need is a passion for education and a free account on Wikieducator. We need your help!

HOW TO REGISTER AN ACCOUNT:

Go to www.WikiEducator.org, click on the "login / create account" link on the top right-hand side of your browser and follow the instructions on screen.



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Wiki Educator

*We're turning the digital divide into digital dividends using free content and open networks.
We hope you can help us.*

COMMONWEALTH of LEARNING
LEARNING FOR DEVELOPMENT

What is a Wiki?

A "Wiki" is a website which anyone can use for publishing or editing content online. It requires minimal technical knowledge. Wikipedia, the free online encyclopedia, is the most well-known Wiki environment and COL's WikiEducator uses the same free software that is used for the Wikipedia free encyclopedia.

You can edit and modify content on a Wiki from anywhere in the world, therefore WikiEducator is an excellent tool for international collaboration on free content development irrespective of your time zone.

What are the values of the WikiEducator community?

The WikiEducator community believes:

- **IN THE SOCIAL INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION** of all people in our networked society (access to ICTs is a fundamental right of knowledge citizens - not an excuse for using old technologies);
- **IN THE FREEDOMS OF ALL EDUCATORS** to teach with the technologies and contents of their choice, hence our commitment to Free/Libre and Open Source technology tools and free content;
- **THAT EDUCATIONAL CONTENT IS UNIQUE** and by working together we can improve the technologies we use as well as the reusability of digital learning resources; and
- **IN A FORWARD-LOOKING DISPOSITION** working together to find appropriate and sustainable solutions for eLearning futures.

HOW CAN YOU *help?*

If you have skills in any of these areas, you can help us in widening access to quality resources for education. This is a collaborative programme which requires help from a wide range of professionals, for example:

CONTENT EXPERTS – WikiEducator is not subject specific and we require assistance from all subject areas.

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNERS – We need the help of instructional designers to enhance the quality of learning resources being developed on WikiEducator.

EDITORS – We must ensure that the learning resources communicate effectively with prospective learners. There is always a need for professional editing and proofreading.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPERS – The scholarship of teaching is a strategic priority for COL and we encourage participation from practitioners working on the professional development of teachers and academics.

DISTANCE EDUCATORS – The pedagogy of asynchronous learning is different from face-to-face teaching and we need help from distance education professionals to assist with reconfiguring materials.



VISUAL DESIGNERS – Visual presentation through graphics, photographs and layout is an integral component of an instructional text. We need professional graphic artists to assist with the professional presentation of free content on WikiEducator.

MULTIMEDIA DESIGNERS – WikiEducator can incorporate rich media including, for example audio and flash objects. We need help with the conversion of video into flash formats as well as the development of rich simulations.

WEB DEVELOPERS – The development of new templates and alternative presentation formats in the Wiki environment requires HTML authoring skills.

INDIGENOUS AND LOCAL KNOWLEDGE EXPERTS – Education is contextual and we require assistance from people knowledgeable about local requirements to develop context specific examples, case studies and activities relating to the content areas being developed on WikiEducator.

IT PROFESSIONALS – We use open source software on WikiEducator and ongoing refinements and innovation in the software we use is always welcome. Without this technical expertise, progress will be slow.

The Wiki environment enables all professionals to work collaboratively online. This is an open community and you are free to assist and help in any way. Every contribution helps.

Why is WikiEducator important?

Social software is changing how we record, access, share and use knowledge. COL believes that WikiEducator will radically expand free learning content and vastly improve access to education in countries of the Commonwealth. The advantages of WikiEducator lie in its accessibility and simplicity. Users can collaborate without consideration for travel, communicating across different time zones or dealing with differences in technology.

How does one use WikiEducator?

Users must create an account which allows you to log in to WikiEducator. You are free to read content, re-distribute it and make improvements or adaptations. WikiEducator tracks changes so you can see how materials have been edited and by whom. If you change your mind it's a simple process to revert back to a previous version of the page that you are working on.