



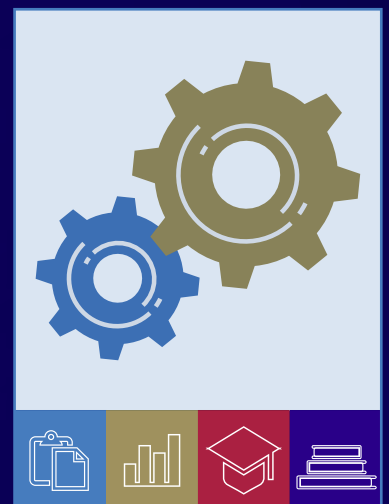
COMMONWEALTH  
*of* LEARNING

Teacher  
Education

# TeacherFutures

## Versioning Guidelines A Blueprint and Toolkit for School-Based Teacher Development: Secondary

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## **Versioning Guidelines**

### **A Blueprint and Toolkit for School-Based Teacher Development: Secondary**



# Acknowledgements

The *Blueprint and Toolkit for School-Based Teacher Development* was developed following the experience of a number of school-based teacher development programmes. Three sources were of particular importance:

The Commonwealth of Learning is grateful to Dr Caroline Pontefract for permission to use elements of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) School-Based Teacher Development (SBTD) Programme.

The Teacher Education in-Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) programme, one of the first major open educational resources (OER) for teacher education, is an important source of OER content that has been adapted for the Blueprint and Toolkit.

The TESS-India programme, which built on the TESSA experience, has also been an important source, particularly for the Key Resources section.

# Introduction

The *Blueprint and Toolkit for School-Based Teacher Development* for secondary teachers has been produced in an initial generic version. All the activities included in the Toolkit have been tried out by thousands of teachers in countries across the world. Every activity has been revised in the light of that experience.

The purpose of the Toolkit is to provide a detailed framework that can be adapted to the context of a particular country, region, district or school. The capacity to version resources is one of the major advantages of the concept of open educational resources (OER).

Versioning, as will be explained more fully in Section 5, can take place at a variety of levels. For example, at a fairly simple level, you can change the names of teachers mentioned in the text to names common to the country in which you live. This may seem a minor point, but experience has shown that making the resources as authentic as possible is significant in gaining the support and respect of teachers. At a more complex level, it is possible to add links to local video clips, incorporate activities that focus on new local curriculum developments or explore changes in the knowledge base of the subject taught.

It is important to remember that the main purpose of the *Blueprint and Toolkit* is to develop school-based teacher development (SBTD). It is hoped that at the end of this initial programme principals and teachers will be more confident about taking charge of improving their professional development. The content of the *Blueprint and Toolkit* aims to give schools tasters of key areas of curriculum development. It also aims, to some extent, to explore the values associated with being a teacher in the contemporary world. All the

topics could, and should, be followed up by more detailed programmes specific to certain topics or subjects.

Creating a version of the Toolkit for certain contexts is an important and interesting task. It gives you the opportunity to influence the ideas and practice of a large number of teachers in your country – no small responsibility!

The first task is to read the Blueprint and the Toolkit carefully. The versioning process is focused on the Toolkit, but the Blueprint as a whole will give you important contextual information.

Your second task is to familiarise yourself with the concept of OER. The next two sections, based on the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and UNESCO publication *Guidelines for Open Educational Resources (OER) in Higher Education*, give you important background information relevant to the versioning task. If you are already familiar with this material, go forward to Section 4. Section 5 explains the practical and technical side of how to approach the versioning task.



## Section 4: Familiarisation with Teacher Development and Related OER Sites

There is now an extensive range of OER sites relevant to teacher development. If you are new to versioning for teacher development, then gaining familiarity with some of these is important.

The Toolkit has taken resources from a number of sites, three of which have been particularly important:

- Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA) which can be found at [www.tessafrica.net](http://www.tessafrica.net)
- TESS-India, which grew from the TESSA concept and can be found at [www.tess-india.edu.in](http://www.tess-india.edu.in)
- OER Africa, one of the earliest OER sites to be established, with a large section devoted to teachers. This can be found at [www.oer.africa.org](http://www.oer.africa.org)

There are two further sites, which, while not dedicated to teachers, illustrate up-to-the-moment ways in which OER are being published and used. The first is called MIT OpenCourseWare (see [www.ocw.mit.edu](http://www.ocw.mit.edu)). The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) was one of the first institutions to seriously embrace the OER idea. In many respects, MIT defined the field. The second site is called Open Learn (see [www.open.edu](http://www.open.edu)) and derives from the UK's Open University. The Open University was, like MIT, involved with OER creation from the beginning and now has a host of resources on this dedicated site.

Looking at these sites will give you an understanding of the field. For example, OER Africa has made available all the resources that were created for an SBTD programme

implemented successfully in the Eastern Province. This programme was developed in the late 1990s by the University of Fort Hare and the materials were expertly produced. These are, however, online versions of the printed text (as such they contain a great deal of material that can still be used today). But compare these with the resources from TESSA and TESS-India, which have been developed much more recently with all the advantages of new tools and increased connectivity.

There is clearly a difference between these OER sites. However, all three could be used by someone creating new OER today. The OER Africa Fort Hare resources are valuable because the ideas remain so strong, and the more recent sites demonstrate contemporary thinking as well as new ways of presenting resources.



## Section 5: Versioning the Blueprint and Toolkit

### What Does Versioning Involve?

As stated earlier, versioning the Toolkit for your local context to make the resources as authentic as possible is very important in helping to gain teachers' support and respect.

To version the document, you will need to read the entire Blueprint, but the majority of changes you make will be to the case studies ('Another teacher's experience' and the activities. As will be explained below, this might mean simply changing the name of a teacher, student or place to match your local context, changing the lesson content to more closely match your local curriculum, or writing new case studies, activities or resources to increase the value of the Toolkit in your context.

### How to Mark Up the Word Document

You will have received the file you need to version (*A Blueprint and Toolkit for School-Based Teacher Development: Secondary*) as a Word document. It would be extremely helpful if you could edit this document with 'Track Changes' enabled in Word (the file you receive should already have this box ticked). If you have any trouble using 'Track Changes', please do not hesitate to contact us.

As there is a limited amount of time for this initial part of the versioning process, we also ask that you submit your versioned copy of the Toolkit back to us in three stages:

- Questions 1–5
- Questions 6–7

- Questions 8–10

### Versioning Levels

As explained in the introduction and above, versioning can be worked through at a number of levels. Three are suggested here and explored in more detail below:

- Level 1: Surface changes to ensure authenticity to context (e.g. changing a teacher's name)
- Level 2: Adaption of activities and texts to represent the specific curriculum and assessment context of the target audience (e.g. modifying a subject-based activity to address a specific part of the country curriculum you are working in)
- Level 3: Incorporation of new elements to significantly localise the resources (e.g. adding a new question that addresses a current local policy initiative, such as one related to gender issues)

It is important to remember that these resources can be versioned over time. You might like to begin with versioning at Level 1, see how it goes in practice and then version again.

You can also carry out different aspects of the versioning in parallel. For example, one person could be working through the resources to make names (for example of people and places) fit your local context, while another develops one or two substantive activities or local case studies relevant to the purpose of the Toolkit. For example, there are 21 activities in the existing Toolkit. It would be possible to add two or three more at the end that suggest or introduce a next stage of school-based

professional development envisaged for your context.

**LEVEL 1: SURFACE CHANGES TO ENSURE AUTHENTICITY TO CONTEXT**

This really speaks for itself. The teachers’ and students’ names used in the text can be changed to reflect your country or local context. Some of the activities and discussion reference local animals or geography. Again, you could change these to reflect your country or a specific local area within it.

The authors of the Toolkit have attempted to keep the text free of particularly loaded cultural references. But please read the text carefully and make changes if necessary.

**LEVEL 2: ADAPTION OF ACTIVITIES AND TEXTS TO REPRESENT THE SPECIFIC CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT CONTEXT OF THE TARGET AUDIENCE**

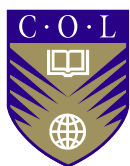
The Toolkit is organised around ten key questions. The first five look at teaching values and skills that are universal. Questions 6–10 are also generic, but it is here that it is possible to introduce changes to represent local circumstances. Questions 6, 7 and 8 are particularly designed for this. For example, Question 6 looks at how teachers can develop subject knowledge. An example is given of how some ‘Big Ideas’ in the science curriculum can be developed. This would be an opportunity to put alongside examples from the local science curriculum (and some other subjects). In the same section, an example is

given of an Australian curriculum network focused on changes in the Earth’s surface. If similar examples exist locally, they can be included alongside this.

**LEVEL 3: INCORPORATION OF NEW ELEMENTS TO LOCALISE THE RESOURCES**

In some local contexts, there may be initiatives that you feel should be included in the Toolkit. For example, if a new assessment system has recently been introduced, then you could include examples by replacing existing Toolkit activities. It might also be possible to replace an existing question in the Toolkit. For example, Question 8 on using the local environment might be taken out and a new question formulated around assessment or whichever issue you consider needs prioritising. Additional questions could also be added to the end of the Toolkit.

Three final points to remember. First, as already discussed above, this is a Toolkit about introducing the process of school-based teacher development. Important topics for professional development are introduced in the Toolkit, but all will need subsequent follow-up. It is important not to overload this resource through adding too many resources that go beyond the main purpose of the Toolkit. Secondly, the Toolkit is an open educational resource that you can take and adapt without worrying about infringing copyright. However, in carrying out the adaptation it is important not to compromise the open nature of the resource by introducing copyright material without the necessary permissions. Thirdly, in the spirit of the OER movement, COL would like others to learn from your experience. You are therefore to lodge your version of the Toolkit with COL.



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