

Policy on Access to Educational Resources

Policy Statement

This policy statement affirms the collective commitment of students, teachers, staff, parents, and the community at large to ensuring that all students have equitable access to a variety of educational resources, regardless of their background, ability, or circumstance which include but not limited to computers, libraries, lectures, online resources, etc. By giving education stakeholders access to educational resources, it aims to promote opportunities for lifelong learning for everyone. It is believed that every stakeholder deserves the opportunity to learn and thrive, and a commitment is made to creating a learning environment that is accessible, supportive, and conducive to success for all. This requires active participation and collaboration from everyone. Each group has a vital role to play in achieving this goal.

Definition of Terms

Digital Educational Resources- This term refers to educational resource materials that are in digital form which are intended to promote the development of digital literacy in education. (Serafin, 2020)

Educational Resources- This term refers to all those materials; human and non-human, drawn or photograph, built manually or electronically operated, print and non-print, and all related materials available in an academic setting to facilitate school administration and the teaching and learning process. (Nwaham, 2023)

Open Educational Resources- This term refers to all educational resources, in any format or medium, which are used by learners, teachers, and researchers that are commonly accessed through the internet. These are resource materials that are easily available, reside in the public domain or are under copyright that have been released under an open license, and that permit no-cost access, re-use, re-purpose, adaptation and redistribution by others. (UNESCO, 2022)

Flexible Learning- This term refers to the pedagogical approach allowing flexibility of time, place, and audience including, but not solely focused on the use of technology. Although it commonly uses the delivery methods of distance education and facilities of education technology, this may

vary depending on the level of technology, availability of devices, internet connectivity, level of digital literacy, and approaches.(CHED Memo. 04, s 2020)

Learning Commons- This term refers to a shared space for physical and virtual learning. It include learning stations for online research and study, furniture for collaborative discussions, social interactions, and individual study. It allows for creativity, collaboration, innovation, and opportunity to enhance teaching and learning outcomes.

Lifelong Learning- This term refers to learning that is ‘not bound to a specific age (childhood and adolescence), but continues throughout life. Hence, learning education should be available for every age and gender; in all contexts (family, school, community, workplace, etc.); cover all levels (school to higher education); and be delivered through formal and non-formal channels to cover out-of-school learners. (Legal Guide to Sustainable Development, 2022)

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

The scope of the policy statement on public access to educational resources is comprehensive and encompasses various aspects of the educational experience. It aims to ensure equitable access to a wide range of resources for all students, regardless of their background, ability, or circumstance.

1. Target Beneficiaries

The policy applies to all students, regardless of their background, ability, or circumstance. This includes students with disabilities, students from low-income families, students who are English language learners, and students from underrepresented minorities and ethnic groups. All school stakeholders, including students, teachers, staff, parents, and the wider community, are also included in this. Each group plays a crucial role in ensuring equitable access to resources.

2. Types of Educational Resources

The policy covers a broad spectrum of resources, including:

Physical resources i.e. books, learning materials, technology, equipment, and facilities.

Digital resources i.e. open educational resources, online learning platforms, databases, software, and digital content.

Human resource i.e. professors, librarians, and other support staff.

3. Principles of Access and Equity

The policy is guided by principles of fairness, accessibility, diversity, and transparency. These principles ensure that resources are allocated equitably, are accessible to all students, reflect the diversity of the student population, and are distributed through a transparent process.

Roles and Responsibilities

Institution

1. The university is responsible for allocating resources fairly and equitably based on student needs and school priorities. This includes ensuring that all students have access to necessary textbooks, learning materials, technology, equipment, and facilities.
2. The university must provide accommodations and support for students with disabilities or special needs, including assistive technology, modified learning materials, and individualized instruction.
3. The university is responsible for ensuring that all students have access to reliable internet and technology, including devices, software, and digital literacy training.
4. The university must provide training and support for teachers to effectively utilize diverse resources, including open educational resources (OER) and technology-based learning tools.
5. The university is responsible in ensuring that all its resources are upgrades/updated, relevant, and accommodating to the variety of learning modalities recommended by the higher education commissions (i.e online learning, blended/hybrid learning, flexible learning).
6. The university should establish a well-designed learning commons that encourage participatory learning by providing shared space for physical and virtual learning.
7. The university should actively seek out and foster partnerships with community organizations and businesses to provide additional resources and opportunities, such as mentorship programs, internships, and career exploration events.

8. The university must maintain transparency in the process for allocating and accessing resources. This includes clearly outlining the criteria for resource allocation and providing information about available resources to students, parents, and the community.
9. The university is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the policy to ensure that it is achieving its goals. This includes gathering data on resource utilization, student achievement, and access equity, conducting periodic reviews of the policy, and establishing mechanisms for collecting feedback from all stakeholders.
10. The university must establish clear procedures for addressing complaints and resolving disputes related to access to educational resources. It should also define consequences for violations of the policy and ensure transparency in the implementation and enforcement of the policy.

Target Beneficiaries

1. Students are expected to actively engage in their learning, utilize available resources responsibly, and communicate any barriers they face in accessing necessary materials or support. They should also participate in school activities and take advantage of opportunities to learn and grow.
2. Teachers, researchers, and school administrators are the frontliners of education and must capitalize in facilitating the appropriate utilization of relevant educational resources to other stakeholders.
3. Parents and guardians are encouraged to partner with the school to support their children's learning. This includes staying informed about available resources, communicating with teachers about their child's needs, and providing support at home. They should also participate in school events and advocate for their child's needs.
4. The wider community plays a crucial role in supporting equitable access to educational resources through partnerships, donations, and volunteer efforts. They can also provide mentorship opportunities, internships, and career exploration events for students.

Policy Details and Procedures

Policy Details

1. The overarching principle is ensuring equal access to high-quality educational resources for all students, regardless of ethnicity, sex, disability, or socioeconomic status.
2. The university shall be obliged to provide comparable and relevant educational resources to all stakeholders.
3. Open Educational Resources (OER): There is a growing movement to promote the use of OER, which are freely accessible and reusable educational materials. This can help reduce costs and increase access to diverse learning resources.

Procedures

1. Individuals or organizations seeking access to educational resources should follow established procedures for making requests. This involves contacting the focal person/ librarian, submitting a formal application, or attending designated events or meetings.
2. The university shall have specific criteria for granting access to resources, such as alignment with curriculum goals, relevance to beneficiaries' needs, and adherence to safety and security protocols.
3. The university shall have process for allocating resources based on beneficiaries' needs. This process may involve data analysis, stakeholder input, and transparent decision-making.
4. The university shall provide accommodations and support for the beneficiaries specifically the persons with disabilities, including assistive technology, modified learning materials, and individualized instruction.
5. The overarching goal is to create an equitable and inclusive educational environment where all students have access to the resources they need to succeed.
6. The university should be transparent about their policies and procedures for accessing resources and be accountable for ensuring equitable access.
7. The university shall ensure that effective access to educational resources through collaboration between schools, communities, and organizations.
8. Policies and procedures on public access to learning resources should be regularly

Monitoring and Review

The policy on access to educational resources requires ongoing monitoring and review to ensure its effectiveness and equity. This process involves evaluating the policy's implementation, identifying areas for improvement, and adapting the policy to meet evolving needs.

Monitoring Process

Outcome indicators shall measure the impact of the policy on public access to educational resources.

1. Tracking enrollment rates for different student groups, including those from marginalized communities, students with disabilities, and those from low-income backgrounds.
2. Monitoring graduation rates across different groups to assess the policy's effectiveness in supporting students' success.
3. Assessing beneficiaries' achievement through standardized tests, performance assessments, and other measures of learning progress.
4. Evaluating the availability and accessibility of physical resources (e.g., textbooks, technology, facilities) and digital resources (e.g., online learning platforms, educational software).
5. Assessing the availability and effectiveness of support services, such as tutoring, counseling, and special provisions.
6. Evaluating the transparency of the policy's implementation and the mechanisms for accountability.
7. Assessing the involvement of students, parents, teachers, and community members in the policy's development and implementation.
8. Analyzing how funds are allocated across different aspects of the policy and ensuring that sufficient resources are dedicated to supporting equitable access.
9. Evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of resource utilization to maximize impact.

Review Process

1. The policy should be reviewed regularly, at least annually, to assess its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.

2. Data from outcome, structural, and financial indicators should be collected and analyzed to inform the review process.
3. Feedback from students, parents, teachers, school administrators, and community members should be actively sought and incorporated into the review process.
4. Based on the review findings, recommendations for policy adjustments and action plans for implementation should be developed.

Consequences of Non-Compliance

While the primary goal of the policy on access to educational resources is to ensure equitable learning opportunities for all students, it's crucial to establish clear consequences for non-compliance to ensure its effectiveness. These consequences should be fair, consistent, and designed to promote positive change.

References

Constitutional Provisions

- **Article XIV, Section 1:** "The State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels, and shall take appropriate measures to make such education accessible to all."
- **Article XIV, Section 2:** "The State shall establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people and society."
- **Article XIV, Section 3:** "All educational institutions shall be under the supervision of, and subject to regulation by, the State."
- **Article XIV, Section 5:** "The State shall provide for the establishment and maintenance of a system of free public education in the elementary and high school levels."

Key Legislations

- **Republic Act No. 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013):** This law promotes the use of technology in education, including the development and integration of online learning resources

- **CHED's Policy on Open Educational Resources (OER):** CHED has a policy promoting the use and development of OER, which are freely accessible educational materials. This policy encourages the use of online resources for learning
- **CHED's Response to COVID-19:** During the pandemic, CHED actively promoted the use of online learning platforms and resources to ensure continuity of education. This demonstrates a recognition of the importance of digital resources in providing access to education.
- **Republic Act No. 7277 (Magna Carta for Disabled Persons):** This law mandates equal opportunities and access to education for PWDs. It requires schools to provide necessary accommodations and support services
- **Republic Act No. 10654 (An Act Providing for the Rights and Privileges of Persons with Disabilities):** This law further strengthens the rights of PWDs, including their right to accessible education
- **CHED Memorandum Order 09, Series of 2013:** This order focuses on enhancing student affairs and services in higher education, including provisions on accessibility for PWDs and promoting inclusive practices
- **CHED Memorandum Order 09, Series of 2013:** This order emphasizes the importance of student support services, including counseling, guidance, and career development programs.
- **Republic Act No. 7722 (Higher Education Act of 1994):** This law mandates that higher education institutions provide adequate student support services, including academic advising, career counseling, and health services.
- **CHED's Guidelines on Student Affairs and Services:** CHED has issued guidelines for student affairs and services, which include provisions on student welfare, safety, and well-being.

Other References

Commission on Higher Education Memorandum Order No. 04 Series of 2020, Guidelines on the Implementation of Flexible Learning

Legal Guide to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (February 2022). Advocates for International Development; London, United Kingdom

The 2019 UNESCO Recommendation on Open Educational Resources (OER) United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 2022
<https://www.unesco.org/en/open-educational-resources>

Nwaham, C. (2023). The impact of educational resources on the quality of educational service delivery in universities in Nigeria, University Of Delta Journal Of Contemporary Studies In Education, 1(1).

Serafin, C. (2020). Digital educational resources in technical education, INTED2020 Proceedings, 388-395.