



National Open University of Nigeria

Policy Title	Policy on Copy Editing of Course Materials
Policy No:	NQSA/POL/TEL/009
Owner:	National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN)
Approved By:	The University Senate
Manager/Driver:	NOUN Press: CMDU
Date of Approval:	7 th October, 2024
Date of Next Review:	October 2027

1.0 Introduction

The Course Material Development Unit (CMDU) is the professional unit where all the National Open University of Nigeria's course materials are processed and published. CMDU was established in 2004. The name was changed to the Directorate of Instructional Resources Development (DIRD) in 2007 which terminated in 2016. The university reverted to the original name CMDU but was subsumed under the Library until 2021 when it became an independent unit again. In 2023, CMDU along with the Printing Press and Warehouse became the Directorate of NOUN Press.

Course Materials play vital role in every ODL institution and NOUN is not an exception. NOUN Course Materials have far-reaching impact on learners and the public. They provide the core information that learners will experience, learn, and apply during a

course. The power to either engage or demotivate students are in these resources. The preparation of instructional materials in the conventional setting is different from the preparation of instructional materials for distance learners. In the conventional institutions, the teacher is physically present in a classroom/lecture hall with his/her students; and he/she can afford to be a little less than careful in his/her preparation and facts, because nobody is watching him/her. However, in preparing materials for distance learning, the teacher is obliged to be more careful as his/her material is immediately in the public domain once it is published. This is the major reason why much emphasis is placed on instructional design and course development in NOUN.

Therefore, the course materials must be well organized, the right words must be chosen for stating objectives and language must be conversational, informal, using such techniques as repetitions, activities, and exercises to enhance teaching in addition to a Tutor-Marked Assignment at the end of every unit. Content must be broken into manageable chunks; the intended learning outcomes of the course must be clearly stated for learners.

CMDU is poised to build on the existing human and material resources to provide contextually relevant resources in diverse formats. The increased availability of quality teaching-learning materials online and in print has paved the way for our learners, lecturers, as well as the public to gain access to a wide variety of contextually relevant course materials in alternative formats: print, web, Braille, etc. Therefore, course materials may include lectures, lecture notes and materials, syllabi, study guides, bibliographies, visual aids, images, diagrams, multimedia presentations, web-ready content - be it printed, braille, digital, internet-based, audio-based or video-based, moodle, or otherwise.

Thus, the Course Materials Development Unit (CMDU) serves as the 'contact point' between the Faculties/Departments, Editors, and Printers/Publishers. The unit collaborates with the Faculties/Departments to develop and write the Course Materials. It receives written Course Materials in soft and hard copies formally from departments; documents, and sets in motion the editing process - content, language, and formatting. After the completion of the editing process, the unit forwards the materials to the NOUN Printing Press for it to initiate the printing process, and to DICT/DLCMS for web upload.

In addition to the above, the Unit is also responsible for updating records of the status of course materials for record-keeping and information purposes. Looking at the responsibilities it is saddled with, it is obvious that CMDU is at the centre of operations of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN).

2.0 Purpose

The aim of this policy is to provide direction in the Copy Editing of Self-Instructional Materials (hereinafter referred to as Course Material) to support quality teaching and learning in the National Open University of Nigeria. In doing so, the policy seeks to strengthen interactivity in the Course Materials for the users.

3.0 Scope

This Policy shall be applicable to all course materials used in servicing certificate, undergraduate and postgraduate courses in NOUN as well as other print materials of the university that passes through the NOUN Press.

Definitions

4.1 Editing:

This refers to the process of going through text to ensure that the text is communicating what the writer or author wants to say without bias.

4.2 Copy Editing:

This is the process whereby the course materials or any other document of the university slated for printing would be subjected to language and format editing.

4.3 Language Editing:

This is the process of checking and assessing a text in ensuring that it fits into its intended context and outcomes. The language editor focuses on choice of words, difficulty level of the text for the understanding of the target audience, and the use of idiomatic expressions. Language **editing includes reworking, proofreading, checking spellings, and rewriting a text.** Where a text is rewritten, it must be brought to the attention of the author (SME) to ensure that the meaning (knowledge) of the text is retained.

4.4 Proofreading:

This refers to the mechanism of improving a text from a lexical and syntactic perspective for grammatical corrections which includes punctuation and spellings. In NOUN, the proofreaders are professional proofreaders.

4.5 Format Editing:

This refers to the presentation of text in an acceptable format (house style) of an institution or organisation. The institution

may have different formats for different documents. For instance, in NOUN, the format for presenting course materials is different from the format for presenting journals and the rest.

4.6 House Style:

This refers to the institutional style of presenting instructional content at both print and virtual mode. This includes presentation style of the headings, page settings, font type and size, colour usage, navigation techniques, ordering of learning devices etc. The house style serves as a brand for an institution. The house style format can easily be used to tell where a document is coming from.

4.7 Instructional Designer:

This refers to an individual who specialises in enhancing learners learning experiences with the application of educational and learning theories towards achieving defined learning outcomes. An instructional designer's responsibility includes leading the development of specific instructional products/contents/materials.

4.8 Subject Matter Expert (SME):

These are classified academic in their areas of specialisations in line with their field of study.

Principles

- 5.1** NOUN is committed to the production of quality instructional materials in terms of readability, correctness in content and language, accessibility, and interactivity.

- 5.2** NOUN is committed to training and retraining of copy editors.

Policy Statements

- 6.1** All course materials in NOUN shall be subjected to the copy-editing process after the design, development, and process review process.
- 6.2** Formatting is also part of the copy-editing process where all course materials is made to conform to the NOUN House style.
- 6.3** The editorial team approach shall be used for the copy editing.
- 6.4** Copy editors shall work under the supervision of the Deputy Director Editing for the respective faculty.
- 6.5** The course materials must be copy-edited before the final production in print or digital format.

Policy Implementation

- 7.1** After the content editing of a course material, the Instructional Designer is to approve the content for copy editing.
- 7.2** The copy editor shall check for right use of words, text difficulty level, use of idiomatic expressions, proofread for grammatical usage and spellings. In addition, may rewrite a text where necessary and ensure compliance with the house style.
- 7.3** After copy editing, the course material must be sent by CMDU to the course writer(s) or author to ascertain

correctness of expressions and to ensure that there is no loss of intended knowledge to be gained due to changes. Where there are differences, both the copy editor and the SME should reach an agreement. The Instructional Designer is to moderate the conversation between the copy editor and the SME.

- 7.4** Once, agreement is reached between the SME and the copy editor, the instructional designer does the final check and hand over to the designated person in CMDU who will send to the printing press and Directorate of Learning Content Management System (DLCMS).
- 7.5** CMDU is to send soft copy of the final production to the Head of Department who will give a copy to the course lecturer.

8.0 Sanctions on Violating this Policy

Any staff who violates the policy or hinders the successful implementation of the policy shall be handed over to the University Disciplinary Committee.

Policy Alignment

This policy aligns with:

- 9.1** Federal Ministry of Education: Blueprint and Implementation Plan for the National Open & Distance Learning Programmes (2002).
- 9.2** Policy on Course Design and Development

10.0 Team of Developers

1. Prof Nebath Tanglang
2. Prof Olugbenga Ojo
3. Prof Olubiyi A. Adewale
4. Prof. Obhajajie Juliet Inegbedion