



## Open Educational Resources (OER) Rubrics and State Support

Teachers and curriculum specialists have expressed great interest in going online and easily identifying and downloading high-quality Open Educational Resources (OER) that are well aligned to specific standards, and immediately implementing these materials in their classrooms. Although some repository sites allow for the tagging of OER by standards, there has not been a widespread process for determining how *well aligned* materials are to those standards and their overall quality. Determining alignment is a matter of great importance to teachers, districts, and states, but it is also a process that can be challenging. To help educators align OER to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), **Achieve has created a series of rubrics to assist users in determining the extent to which an OER matches the cognitive and performance demands of a particular standard or set of standards.**

### Open Educational Resources

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation defines Open Educational Resources (OER) as teaching, learning and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and repurposing by others.

In addition to determining the alignment to standards of OER, educators also want to sort OER by the quality of various learning object attributes.

While it is possible to provide a single, holistic rating for a resource, this kind of rating may mask specific aspects of quality or unique characteristics of OER that are important to educators. To that end, **Achieve developed a set of rubrics to help gauge various aspects of quality, allowing an additional filter for sorting and another way to discover high-quality OER.** For example, these rubrics enable ratings of the quality of content explanation and assessment. These kinds of ratings are essential, especially for states and districts looking to recommend specific OER to their teachers.

### Benefits of OER

Educators can engage with OER in the following ways:

- **Revise**—adapt and improve the OER so it better meets the needs of teachers or students
- **Remix**—combine the OER with other OER to produce new open materials
- **Reuse**—use the original or a new version of the OER in different contexts
- **Redistribute**—make copies and share the original OER or a new version, free of traditional copyright restrictions<sup>3</sup>

In total, eight rubrics were developed: one (Rubric I) to determine alignment, six (Rubrics II – VII) to determine various aspects of quality, and one (Rubric VIII) to determine the accessibility of an OER. To develop these rubrics, Achieve combined our long-standing expertise working on standards and assessments with that of an Advisory Panel, comprised of leading members of the OER community from across the country. The rubrics were developed with significant input and feedback from an Advisory Panel of state and national leaders and partner organizations. The eight rubrics are<sup>1</sup>:

<b>Rubric I.</b>	<b>Degree of Alignment to Standards</b>
<b>Rubric II.</b>	<b>Quality of Explanation of Content</b>
<b>Rubric III.</b>	<b>Utility of Materials as Tools to Teach Others</b>
<b>Rubric IV.</b>	<b>Quality of Assessment</b>
<b>Rubric V.</b>	<b>Degree of Interactivity</b>
<b>Rubric VI.</b>	<b>Quality of Practice Exercises</b>
<b>Rubric VII.</b>	<b>Opportunities for Deeper Learning</b>
<b>Rubric VIII.</b>	<b>Assurance of Accessibility<sup>2</sup></b>

<sup>1</sup> Rubrics available for download at <http://www.achieve.org/oer-rubrics>

<sup>2</sup> Note: It was determined that the first seven rubrics would be hosted on the website since Rubric VIII requires a level of expertise that the majority of users will not have.



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After the rubrics were developed, Achieve worked with the online repository, [OER Commons](#), a project of the Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education (ISKME), to develop and embed the rubrics rating scheme into the existing OER Commons rating interface on the website. The rating system was then piloted with school and district users in order to test the tool, hone the rubrics and provide ratings for a significant number of OER in the system.

Building on these streams of work, seven states in Achieve’s American Diploma Project (ADP) Network—*California, Illinois, Louisiana, Minnesota, North Carolina, Washington, and Wisconsin*—agreed to work together in Achieve’s OER Institute. The goal of the OER Institute is to bring these states together to discuss issues and policy barriers surrounding the use of OER in college- and career-ready standards implementation. This ongoing, year-long effort has included webinars for states to discuss these issues, such as the use of open licensing and measures of quality, as well as an in-person convening in November 2012 for state teams to share current progress in using OER and engage in strategic planning activities to use OER in their transition to the CCSS. Achieve will continue to provide a forum to advance this work through virtual and in-person convenings for OER Institute states, state-specific assistance to implement plans related to OER and OER materials review sessions.

### **Additional Resources:**

[Achieve Open Educational Resources Evaluation Rubrics and Tool Videos](#)

[Achieve Open Educational Resources Evaluation Tool Handbook](#)

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<sup>3</sup> Adapted from: Wiley, David and Cable Green. “Why Openness in Education?” *Game Changers: Education and Information Technologies*. Educause, 2012.