

The Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning

Using WikiEducator for PCF5: your first steps

We have teamed up with WikiEducator to offer an exciting service for delegates to the Fifth Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF5). WikiEducator is a resource developed by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), putting wiki technology at the service of those who are involved in educational research and practice. With 'openness' being a key theme of PCF5, WikiEducator will provide an optional avenue through which delegates can post their abstracts, develop their papers and engage in a dialogue with a wider community. It's easy to get involved and present ideas for your paper or workshop session:

1) Register for WikiEducator

First, you need to create a WikiEducator account. When going to www.wikieducator.org, you will find a link on the top right of the page, entitled 'login/create an account'. Just follow the instructions, and you will become a member of the WikiEducator community. (To find out more about the WikiEducator project you can visit www.wikieducator.org/WikiEducator>About.)

2) Getting started on WikiEducator

On www.wikieducator.org/PCF5, you will find abstracts of papers that have been added by other contributors. They have been ordered according to the Forum's four themes or included in a section on cross-cutting themes.

Through www.wikieducator.org/PCF5, you can also access an **online tutorial** which will show you how to use WikiEducator. If you are not familiar with wiki technology, we suggest that you use the tutorial before getting started.

3) Upload your paper

a) Make sure you are logged in as a PCF5 user; then go to www.wikieducator.org/PCF5. On the bottom of the page, you will see a box with the heading 'Start drafting your paper now'. In the box which starts with 'PCF5:', leave a space after the colon and enter your paper title.

NB: make sure that there are no typing mistakes in the title of your paper, as it will be difficult to change this afterwards.

b) You will be automatically directed to a new screen, containing a field into which you can copy and paste your abstract, project outline and/or paper. The fields are pre-formatted – just enter your text in the appropriate field (e.g. the text of your abstract below the heading that says 'abstract').

Through wiki technology, you can update your information anytime and won't have to worry about the other sections (e.g. 'your first heading') to which you might want to add material at a later stage.

c) Press 'show preview' (halfway down your page) to see what your abstract will look like.

d) If you are happy with it, scroll down and press 'save page'. If you aren't, you can continue to modify the information in your field. Make sure you do not forget to press 'save page' after you have finished modifying your work.

4) Check that your paper has been added (1-2 days later)

Once we have seen that you have uploaded your paper, we will add a link to your work under the appropriate thematic section (e.g. 'livelihoods', 'health' etc.). The timing for this may vary, but should not exceed two working days.

5) Edit and comment on papers (your own texts and others)

Once published, you can edit your own texts as well as those entered by others. Simply log in and go to the page you wish to edit. Each page can be switched into 'edit' mode by first accessing the page and then pressing 'edit' on the top bar.

There are different points when you might wish to edit a page:

- you would like to modify your abstract or text, following other people's suggestions;
- you would like to add sections of your paper below your abstract (e.g. in the section that is provisionally entitled '*Substitute this text with your first heading*');
- you would like to help other people to improve their text, for example, when coming across factual errors or typing mistakes.

NB: All changes can be reversed – so you won't have to worry about people mistakenly editing your paper.

6) Discuss with your fellow PCF5 participants

Please be respectful when editing other people's work. If you would like to propose substantial changes, make comments about ideas or refer to further resources that may be of interest to other contributors, it is best to raise them through the 'discussion' page. Each page on WikiEducator has such a section – you can access it by clicking on the 'discussion' button on the top bar.

In addition to this, we have now launched a special discussion forum for further-reaching comments on the conference themes or aspects thereof: You can subscribe to it through our Googlegroups site: <http://groups.google.com/group/pcf5-list/>

7) Get additional wiki training

The 'get help' section on www.wikieducator.org/PCF5 has a link to a more extensive wiki tutorial. COL is also running a series of online courses as part of the 'Learning for Content' project' (www.wikieducator.org/Learning4Content) that will help you get familiar with WikiEducator and editing in WikiEducator. Please feel encouraged to register for one of these courses.

If you have any questions with regard to posting your abstract or other PCF5 contributions in WikiEducator or if you have encountered any difficulties uploading and editing your abstracts/papers, please contact Daniel Laqua (daniel.laqua@london.ac.uk) from the PCF5 team. Thank you for reading - we hope you enjoy this opportunity to develop your work in a sharing and collaborative wiki community!