Introduction to the FH Südwestfalen website and the ContentCreator (WebEditor) of the CMS FirstSpirit (05/2025)

If you have any questions regarding the concept, content, or technical aspects, please contact: webteam@fh-swf.de

The Website of the South Westphalia University of Applied Sciences

The website of the South Westphalia University of Applied Sciences is that of a public institution and is therefore subject to various legal requirements. As a co-editor of this online presence, you share responsibility—please read the website guidelines carefully.

When editing or creating new content, always consider the following questions:

- What purpose should the page serve?
- Are the contents truly relevant to the target audience?
- Are the contents justifiable? Are other institutions or individuals affected?
- Might the content already be published elsewhere? If so, please link or reference it, but never duplicate it!
- Is the information being updated at appropriate intervals?
- Is the presentation appropriate? Is it accessible and smartphone-compatible?
- Is the page clearly defined with a title, description, and header—and distinguishable from similar pages? For example, pages like “Team,” “FAQ,” or “Lab” should include contextual details, otherwise the search function becomes confusing!
- Will the intended audience be willing to engage with the content thoroughly?

When in doubt: less is more!

- A comprehensive and information-rich site like that of a university must strive to reduce content to the essentials—especially when similar topics need to be presented in different contexts.
- The primary target audiences are used to brief summaries—lengthy texts can be off-putting.
- Redundant content is not only unnecessary, it quickly becomes inconsistent during updates and causes confusion and uncertainty.

Design & Page Structure Guidelines

The new design focuses more strongly on the needs and expectations of the primary target audiences—prospective students and current students—and on their visual and usage habits, including mobile device use such as smartphones. Therefore:

- The pages contain less text.
- The navigation structure has been flattened.
- Pages have become longer, but the magazine-like layout—with large subheadings and graphical elements—makes them easier to scan.

Key features:

- Individual sections on a page can be directly linked (anchor navigation).
- The main navigation remains fixed at the top of the screen and is always accessible.
- Location-specific information and supplemental content (formerly in the right margin) are now placed at the paragraph level.

Working with the ContentCreator of CMS FirstSpirit

Note: Although much remains the same, the new project introduces two essential changes:

- Image sections must be defined.
- Page changes must be approved before they are generated.

See below for more details.

1. Access to FirstSpirit and the ContentCreator

To use the CMS, you need a browser and login credentials.
The server is accessible only within the university network (when using VPN, select the employee profile).
Address: https://cms.fh-swf.de

- Your login is usually identical to your main university password (used for email, Moodle, VPN, etc.).
- For non-personal accounts, you will receive credentials from **webteam@fh-swf.de**.

To start regular editorial work, click on the **ContentCreator** button.
The ContentCreator's capabilities will continue to be expanded in the future.

Select the project **"1. FHSWF_NEU"** by clicking on it.

2. ContentCreator Controls in FirstSpirit

Each web page in FirstSpirit consists of at least one paragraph.
Depending on the content and context, different **paragraph templates** are available.

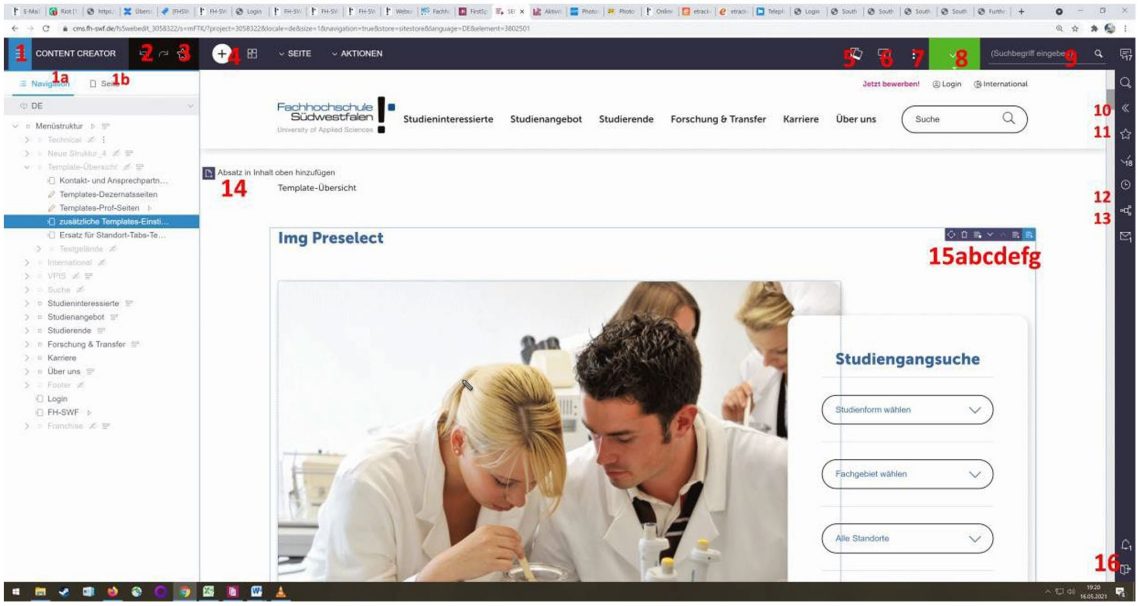
Some templates contain **sub-elements**, but these cannot be referenced, hidden, or directly linked like actual paragraphs.

Templates are introduced in the *Template Examples* section, where you can also copy them.

You can freely combine multiple paragraph types on a single page.
A list of all paragraph types is found at the end of the document.

Key behavior of the ContentCreator interface:

- The webpage is extended with controls at the paragraph level and page edges.
- You can use the page normally, but with additional tools to edit, delete, or add content.
- **Changes are not applied directly to the live site**, but are first saved on a staging server.
- After **approval** (see below), changes are included in the next **generation cycle**.
- **Generation starts on the hour** and takes about one hour.
- Then, changes should be visible live (reload your browser if necessary).
- Search index updates occur the **next day**.



ContentCreator – Buttons and Their Functions

1. **Expand navigation menu**
   Opens the menu structure.
   - You can also access pages that are hidden or not live.
   - Use the arrow to expand submenus.
   - Squares represent menu items; page icons represent pages (blue/green tree in SiteArchitect).
   - Right-clicking a name opens a context menu.
   - **Structural changes** must be discussed with the Web Team.
   - Additionally, you can view the structure of the current page and its paragraphs.

2. **Undo/Redo**
   Undo or redo your last action.

3. **Set bookmarks**
   Can be recalled via button 11.
   Highly recommended for navigating the large tree structure efficiently.

4. **Create a new page or copy an existing one**
   A bit more complex than in SiteArchitect—check with the Web Team if unsure.

5. **Media management**
   Upload, edit, or organize files in designated folders.
   More details are covered in the media section below.

6. **Preview**
   View a preview for desktop and mobile devices.

7. **Help & Settings**
   Online help, guided tours, font scaling, and language settings (English option available).

8. **Approval button**
   Approves page changes for the next generation cycle.

- After editing, a **yellow pencil** appears—click it and select "Direct Approval" to approve yourself.
- If the button turns **red**, mandatory fields or dependencies are missing—ask the Web Team.
- If the button turns **green**, approval was successful.
- Deletion also requires approval and works similarly.

9. **Search**
   Restrictable internal CMS search.

10. **Recently edited pages**
    List of your most recently edited pages.

11. **Bookmarks list**
    Shows all bookmarks you've set.

12. **File history**
    Allows rollback of changes if needed—ask the Web Team when unsure.

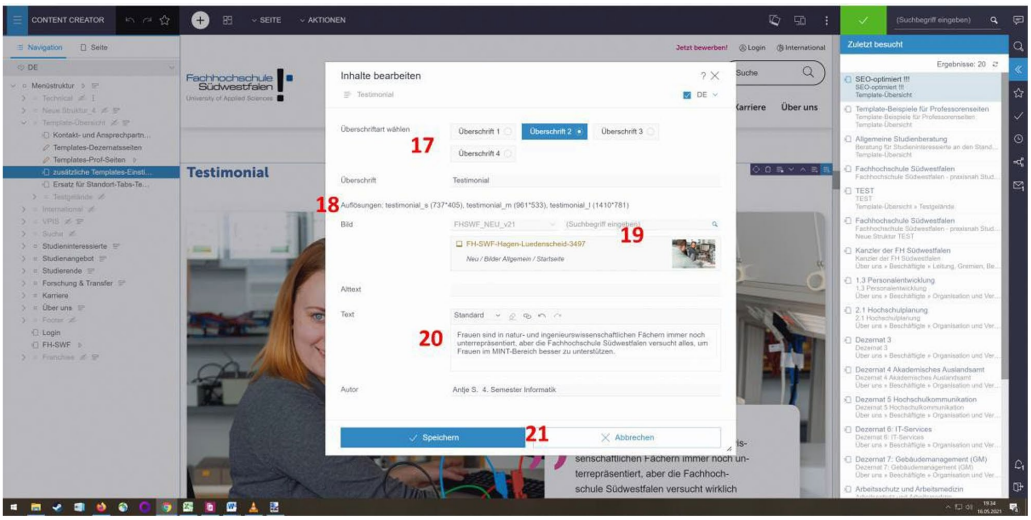
13. **Incoming/outgoing links**
    Shows internal CMS links (pages/images only).
    External links are not included.
    For a better overview of dependencies, use SiteArchitect.

14. **Add new paragraph**
    Insert a new empty paragraph, a copy, or a saved template.

15. **Edit existing paragraph**

- **(a)** Move paragraph
- **(b)** Delete paragraph
- **(c)** Save as copy template
- **(d/e)** Move up/down
- **(f)** Add 3/7 paragraph
- **(g)** Edit paragraph content (see next section)

16. **Logout**
    Ends the session.



Editing Paragraphs (Buttons 17–21)

17. **Heading size**
    Can be selected for each paragraph.
    Please ensure hierarchical consistency for accessibility—e.g., H1 > H2 > H3 (not H1 > H3 > H2).

18. **Image resolution**
    If the template includes an image, a note will indicate the required resolution.
    Further details on working with images are provided in the next chapter.

19. **Search to link files or pages**
    You can limit the search scope in the dialog.
    Make sure files and pages are clearly and meaningfully named.

20. **Text editor**
    Used to enter and format text, insert links, create lists, and (if needed) tables.

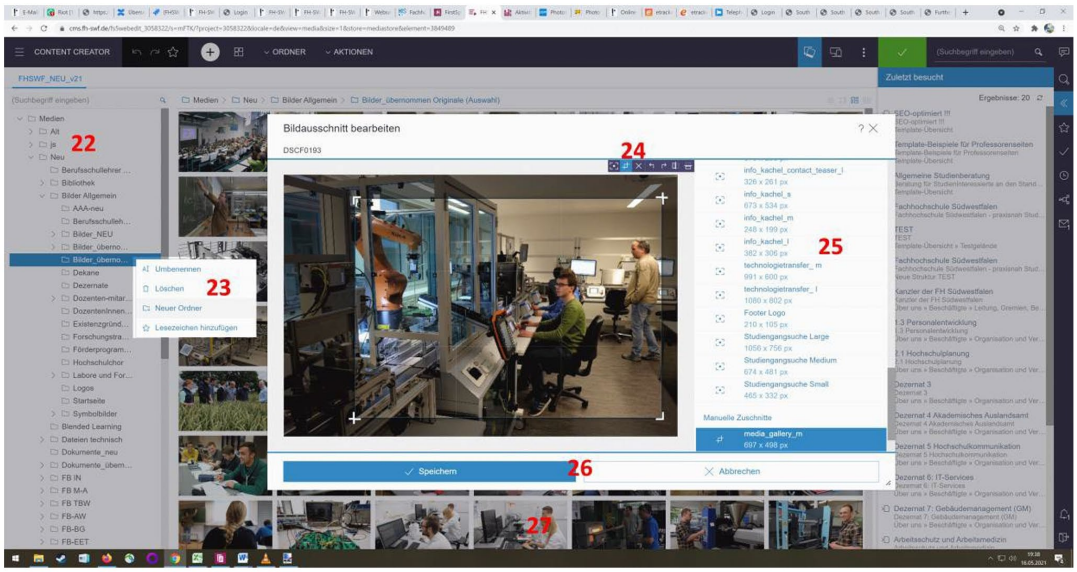
- If you know Word, this will feel mostly familiar.
- However, formatting options are context-dependent—not all are available everywhere (e.g., due to smartphone compatibility).

Linking internal pages or media:

- You can upload a new file or select an existing one from the CMS.
- When linking a page, you may choose specific paragraphs so the link jumps directly to a section—even to a section on the same page.
- Alternatively, you can manually set **anchor points**, which don't appear in the text but can be targeted by links using their names.
- Accordion entries require special link templates (not available everywhere).
- If the paragraph contains sub-elements, you can also edit, add, or delete them—the editor shifts sideways to accommodate this.
- Note: sub-elements **cannot** be referenced or hidden independently.

A full overview of available paragraph templates is provided at the end of the document.

21. **Save or discard changes**
    Self-explanatory.



Media Management (Buttons 22-26):

22. **Media Management Structure**
    The structure mirrors the old system under “Downloads” and is organized by faculties, departments, committees, etc.
    Below these lie the individual instructor directories.

- Files and folders can be uploaded via drag & drop directly from the Windows File Manager into the appropriate directory.
- Files intended for **download** must be **accessible**—see the separate guide on creating accessible documents.
- ⚠ **Important:** All changes, including file uploads, must be **approved** before being published!

23. **Restricting access to internal network only**

- Create a folder named intern and place the file there.
- Files can be moved within the directory structure without losing their links.
- To **update** an existing file (e.g., a PDF), **edit the existing item** and assign a new file via the edit dialog. This way, references and URLs remain intact.
- If instead, the file is uploaded as a **new object**, it will generate a **new URL**—even if the file name is the same.
- You can view incoming and outgoing links for any file or folder.
- Only **delete** files or folders when they are **no longer in use**.

24. **Create image crops**
    Only one original image is uploaded.
    However, different templates require **different resolutions**, so the appropriate **image sections** must be defined—typically for:

- **L** (Desktop)
- **M** (Tablet)
- **S** (Smartphone)
  This ensures optimal display across devices.
- There's also a feature for **“intelligent cropping”**, but it may not always select the best image section.
- **Image descriptions** are optional.

- **Alternative texts** can be added directly in the paragraph templates and are required **only** if the image conveys meaningful content.

⚠ **All image changes—including crops—must also be approved before publication!**

25. **Resolution list**
    Overview of required resolutions (as described above).
26. **Save or discard changes**
    Self-explanatory.

Appendix 1: Available Paragraph Templates

Not all paragraph templates can be used everywhere.
Older templates that are still temporarily usable are shown grayed out.

Content

- **Absatz-Container**
  Standard paragraph template and the only template offering a **right-hand sidebar** (marginal column). Similar to the old layout, sub-paragraphs can be placed in the center and the right margin.
  - Sub-paragraphs follow the same structure as regular paragraph templates but with limited options for usability reasons.
  - The container can be configured to "overlap" the **key visual** at the top of the page.
    - **Warning:** Use this only at the top of the page. If placed lower, overlapping occurs with the paragraph above.
  - In **mobile view**, the right margin content is placed **below** the center content.
- **Akkordeon**
  Allows individual paragraphs to be expanded/collapsed, like the old FAQ template.
  - Text, tables, and downloads can be used as sub-paragraphs (no images).
  - Manual anchor links can be added and targeted via accordion-specific link types.
- **Big Bubble**
  Visually similar to old nav_children templates.
  - Each bubble (with optional location, image, title, text, link) is a sub-paragraph.
- **Con_middle_Download**
  - Allows upload of files via drag & drop or moving within the media structure.
  - Choose between **automated folder listing** (via folder selection) or **manual list**.
  - Sorting usually by media description (or file name if none provided).
  - For date-based sorting, limit display quantity.
  - Files are globally accessible unless placed in an intern folder.
  - Alternatively, use **download links** inside a text paragraph.
- **HTML_Form Generator**
  - Revised form generator.
  - For help, contact the Web Team.
  - Avoid using raw HTML, PHP, or JS due to increasing demands for **responsiveness, security, and accessibility**.
- **Con_middle_Tabelle**
  - Manual row/column creation.
  - First row defaults to header (can be disabled).
  - Limited formatting—only first column width adjustable via pixels.
  - ⚠ Use tables only when **structurally necessary**, not for layout—especially due to mobile and accessibility limitations.
- **Content-Filter**
  Allows dynamic content display in the main section, with toggle buttons or dropdowns in the right margin.
  - Useful for variations like locations, semesters (WS/SS), degree types (BA/MA), or presence/blended modes.
  - In mobile view, the selection menu moves to the center, between the heading and content.
- **Content-Text**
  Like the old con_middle_text template.
  - In the new layout, due to wider text blocks, better with added images.
  - Sub-paragraphs work like in other templates.
  - Supports bold, italics, subheadings (keep hierarchy), manual line breaks (Shift+Enter).

    - Link types: internal (CMS structure), external (http…), download (media items), accordion (if context allows), news/press entries.
    - Location links are deprecated and will be removed.
    - Formatting and links can be removed with right-click.
- **Content-Text mit Zitat**
  Like above, but includes a quote box.
- **Two-column Content-Text**
  Like above, but with left and right columns.

Info

- **Ansprechpartner Einzelauswahl**
  Pull contact info for a single person directly from TeleMail.
    - Can be filtered by location (optional).
- **Chart Teaser**
  For visual display of statistical data.
- **Con_middle_Mitarbeiter Details**
  Pulls staff contact info via TeleMail using first and last name.
- **Contact Teaser**
  Recommended alternative to the above.
    - Pulls data via TeleMail—enter first and last name.
    - Optionally shows image, office hours, and location.
    - Name, email, and phone can now be overwritten for non-personal contact info.
    - Display options: 3 entries side by side, or one entry double-width.
    - Optional location filtering or link to internal page.
- **Kennzahlen Section**
  Displays small statistical highlights across the full page width.
- **Location-Selected Content**
  Similar to Big Bubble, but entries are filterable by location.

Media

- **Double Big Image**
  One image or video with a second image and a text box.
    - Text box may include a title and link.
    - Background color: blue or white.
    - For YouTube: provide valid URL and choose a custom thumbnail.
    - ⚠ Check legal rights before using third-party materials!
- **Media Gallery**
  Create an image gallery (swipe navigation, no preview).
    - Each image requires a short caption.
- **Testimonial**
  Image plus quote with citation.
- **Text-Bild-Absatz groß**
  One image with a larger text box.

Optional background color: blue or white.

Note on Right Marginal Column

- Sub-paragraphs in the marginal column:
    - Are **not referable or hideable**
    - Are **placed below** the center content in mobile view