

Docs about the docs

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MY GRADUATE PROJECT

This is my graduate project written in oXygen tool and uploaded to GitHub Pages. This is the link where you can find the repository of this project. <https://github.com/madzka/docs-about-the-docs>

The purpose of this documentation is to show for future students what they can achieve and learn during Technical Communication studies as well as the steps one has to take in order to produce technical documentation. It contains resources as well as information every student should have in order to complete their Graduate Project by applying the knowledge and skills gained in the program. This documentation shows the process of documentation development.

This is the final project which presents the result of Technical Communications studies at Vistula University in Warsaw. You can find more info about this postgraduate studies at <https://www.vistula.edu.pl/kierunki-studiow/kontynuacja-edukacji/studia-podyplomowe/informatyka/komunikacja-techniczna>

This documentation was created by Magdalena O.

WHY oXygen AND DITA IN MY PROCESS OF DOCUMENTATION

During my studies I have worked with oXygen XML Editor, MadCap Flare and Markdown as well as GitHub . Those are the main tools I should be able to know and work with. I have never worked as a technical writer and never used any tools regarding technical writing.

As you can find in the definition taken from the official website *Oxygen XML Editor is the complete XML editing solution, both for XML developers and content authors. It provides must have tools for XML editing, covering most XML standards and technologies. Oxygen XML Editor includes all the features of Oxygen XML Developer and Author* https://www.oxygenxml.com/xml_editor.html it is an XML tool that supports all of the XML schema languages and provides a large variety of powerful tools for editing and publishing XML documents. I have used this tool because it has been a very easy tool to understand and it took me two weeks to understand it. I have generated PDF file and HTML output with oXygen XML Editor. I have also used DITA which is an XML standard/an architecture. Shortly speaking, it is a type of XML for technical writing that helps to structure, develop, manage and publish content, and oXygen XML Editor makes it easy to create and edit.

I feel very comfortable while writing the documentation in oXygen and DITA. On the left side I see all topics I generated and it is easy to open, edit and manage. I can work with a few files at the same time. Additionally, DITA is divided into two main units of authoring: topics and maps so it simplifies the structure of writing. I know what to write in which place. Below there is a table presenting the types of DITA Topics I have followed.

Table 1: DITA TOPICS

DITA TOPICS TYPES	What are they good for?
Concept Topic	Good for background information, explaining about something , product description, instructions and definitions
Task Topic	Good for step-by-step instructions, any procedural instructions
Reference Topic	Good for specifications about the subjects, tables, bulleted list.
Glossentry Topic:	Good for defining terms



Notice: Below I present the outputs you are expected to create after reading this User guide.

DOCUMENTATION PLAN

How my documentation came to be.

The first step you should take is writing an outline of documentation plan which presents the roadmap of the project and keeps the track of your process during the realization. The main steps needed to follow are:

1. **PLAN** When planning your process it helps you to visualize the draft of the final project design. It also improves readability and clarity of your documentation. When doing my project I used JIRA to plan my steps in AGILE Project Management. It also made me to meet my deadlines.
2. **AUDIENC**E This step helps you understand who is your audience. You have to define the persona you write to because it defines the target group of users. There are different online tools e.g. <https://xtensio.com/how-to-create-a-persona/> which help you to create a persona with all details needed to target the user group and the content. This persona helps technical writers to set the relevant and customized content.
3. **STYLE** It is good to write a document in a specific style guide because it helps to achieve a plain language and write in a nice style of language. It is a set of standards for writing content which helps to maintain a consistent and plain style, voice and tone across your documentation. The style guide also provides general information about grammar and syntax to be used while writing technical documentation. I have chosen two styles of writing this documentation; the sections related to installation, steps and tools are written in more technical way with Google style guide available at <https://developers.google.com/style>, and the website part related to more general description of documentation is written in Microsoft style guide available at <https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/style-guide/welcome/>. I decided to write the general part in Microsoft style guide because this style is described as warm, relaxed, clear and ready to lend a hand. My persona is a person who has no idea about technical writing so I would like to use the way *'write like you speak, simple and human'* to let my persona understand everything. On the other hand, I have written the part of my documentation in Google style guide. The part written in Google style is related to creating project, installing and setting up tools - the sections related to more technical aspects of documentation. I want to show how the styles are different and what are the differences in the language.
4. **OUTLINE OF TOPICS** This part covers topics, and subtopics in your technical documentation. You should write a table of contents and list the main sections and subsections that you will write and describe

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

This documentation shows how to get started with the process of writing, publishing and designing your first documentation.

To complete this process, read through the material on HTML page. Some of the files are written as a step-by-step documentation presenting the development of process documentation. This documentation is a simple document describing the way how my documentation came to be at a granular level, and helps you achieve the same outputs. I guide you through the whole process of using advanced tools, mainly oXygen and GitHub Pages, while writing documentation. The website describes all tools used in the documentation process as well as all steps which are necessary to do before you start writing. The PDF file is the final product which will support you during the writing process, and is available to download. Using this documentation you are able to create your own documentation.

So, let's get started!

TOOLS FOR DOCUMENTATION PROCESS

Here you can find the list of tools used in this documentation with a short description of their purpose and use.

General purpose tools

Below I present tools I was using while writing, managing and creating my final project. Those can help to state requirements, share information, and document features and processes:

1. ATlassian CONFLUENCE.

CONFLUENCE is the project tool I used during my studies where I could manage product requirements and writing documentation. It is the remote workspace where one can collaborate, create and share ideas, documents and many more with other teams. You are also able to assign tasks to specific users or group, leave comments and share your knowledge.

2. ATlassian JIRA

JIRA is the workspace where I created my documentation plan, presented my persona, outputs and styleguide, as well as I uploaded the links to my final project. Then it was assigned to my project supervisor and reviewed by him. Below you can find the screenshot of JIRA board. There you find SPRINTs which show the present status of your project, to do list, reviewed files and completed documents. JIRA is an easy tool for communication between people who work in a team, you share your documentation with your team and get feedback.

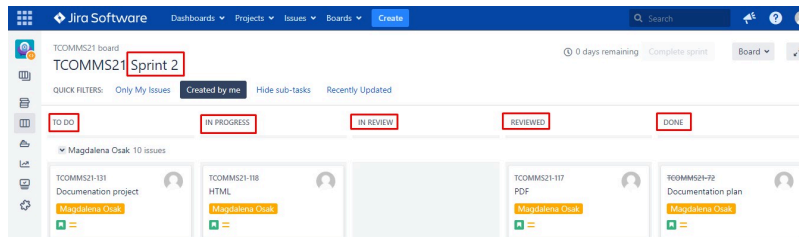


Figure 1: JIRA workspace

3. oXygen XML EDITOR + DITA

My documentation is written in oXygen XML Editor where I was able to create my documentation. Using oXygen XML Editor I can build, organize and manage my documentation easily. My documentation is written in structured mark-up language such as XML. I also used *DITA* which is an XML standard, an architectural approach, and a writing methodology, developed by technical communicators for technical communicators. It provides a standardised architectural framework for a common structure for content that promotes the consistent creation, sharing, and re-use of content. More information about DITA you can find on <https://www.oxygenxml.com/doc/versions/23.1/ug-editor/topics/author-dita.html>.

4. GitHub PAGES

GitHub <https://github.com/> is a hosting website which provides free hosting for open source programs and private repositories. My documentation is uploaded there and available to read and share. In addition, GitHub provides a service called **GitHub Pages** for quickly creating static web pages.

5. Lightshot

This is an application I used to capture screenshots of selected area which you can see in the texts. It is available at <https://app.prntscr.com/en/>

oXygen INSTALLATION

This is a step-by-step guide how to install oXygen XML Editor.

Go to <https://www.oxygenxml.com/> and download the installer. Click on **Resources** on the web toolbar and then **Download** oXygen XML Editor. Oxygen XML Editor is available on Windows, Linux, and macOS. Choose the right system.

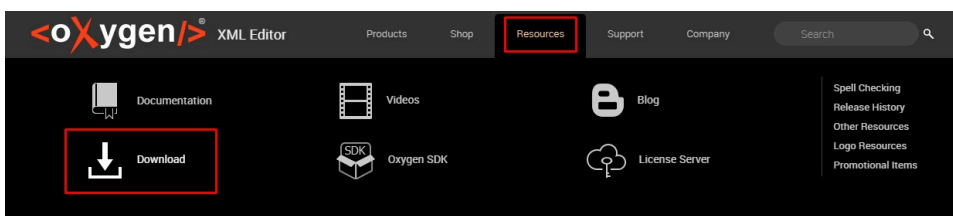


Figure 2: oXygen Installation

Run the installer and follow the instructions in the installation program. Find the icon on the desktop and run the oXygen XML Editor.

You can download Oxygen XML Editor and test it for free for 30 days but you have to complete the form on https://www.oxygenxml.com/xml_editor/register.html and your 30-day trial license will be emailed to you. You must insert a valid non-disposable email address to receive a license key.

When you launch Oxygen XML Editor for the first time, you are greeted with a **Welcome** dialog box. It presents upcoming events, useful video demonstrations, helpful resources, the tip of the day, and also gives you easy access to recently used files and projects and to create new ones.

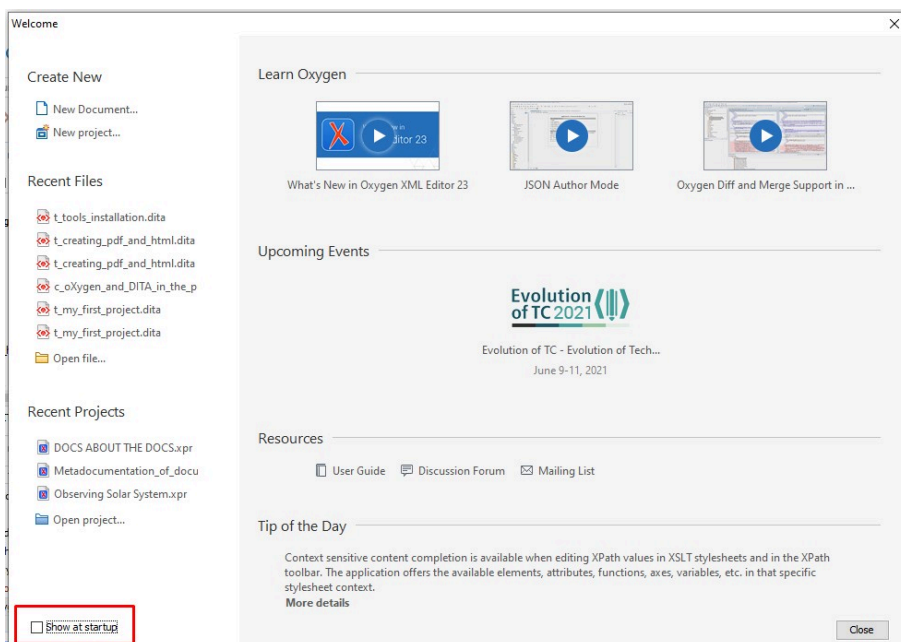


Figure 3: Welcome box

If you do not want it to be displayed every time you launch Oxygen XML Editor, deselect the **Show at startup** option in the bottom-left corner of the dialog box. To display it any time, go to **Help** → **Welcome**.

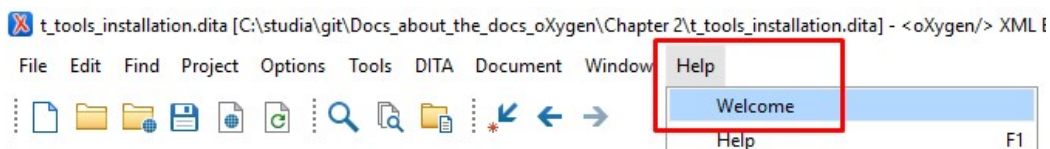


Figure 4: Display Welcome box

WORKING WITH DOCUMENTS

Setting up the oXygen Preferences

Before you start using oXygen XML Editor you have to setup the Editor options using the **Preferences**

Configuration

1. To open the preferences dialog box, go to **Options**→ **Preferences**.
2. Go to **Editor**section and activate the *Whitespaces* options
3. In **Editor**section go to **Edit Modes**→ **Text** and select **Show print margin**and **Line wrap**
4. Next go to **Editor** → **Format** and select **Format and indent the document on open**
5. Now go to **Full tags**options and select **Full Tags**

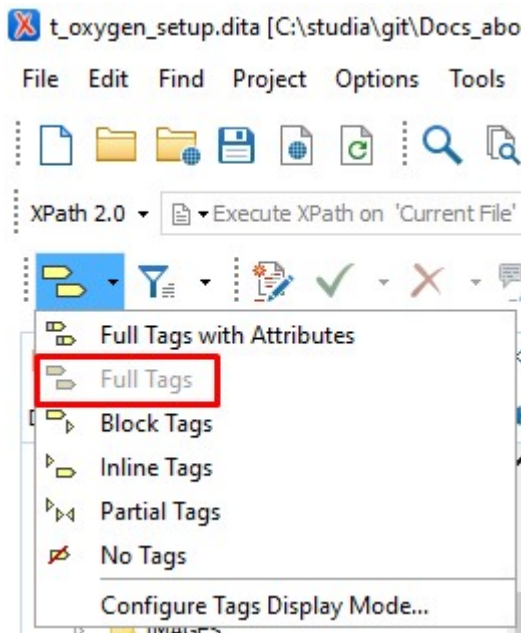


Figure 5: Full Tags Options

Now you can see tags in the author view



Figure 6: Tags in the author view

6. Remember to save your changes during writing. A star * in the Editor tab indicates unsaved changes.

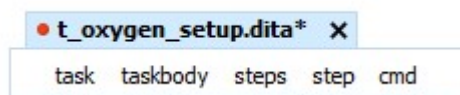


Figure 7: Unsaved changes

CREATING YOUR FIRST PROJECT

This section shows how to start a project in oXygen XML Editor.

This quick guide presents how to write an XML document in a newly created project within the oXygen tool.

1. To start your first document you have to create **New Project**. To create a new project click **New Project** on **Welcome** box



Attention: If you do not have **Welcome** box, click on **Help** → **Welcome**

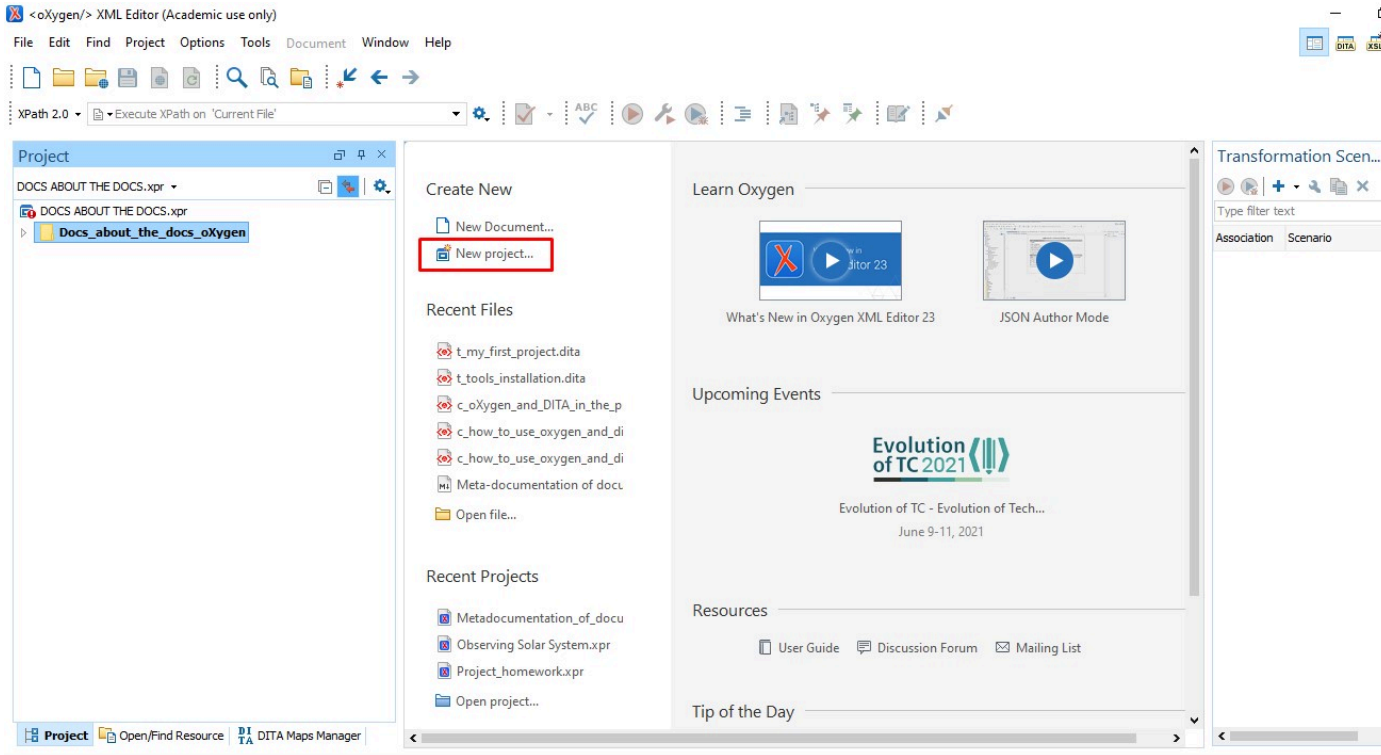


Figure 8: Figure: New Project

2. Now choose a project template, for starters, leave Deafault project template. Next, specify the name of the new project file and choose the project directory (localization of the project). Click **Choose** and **Create**.

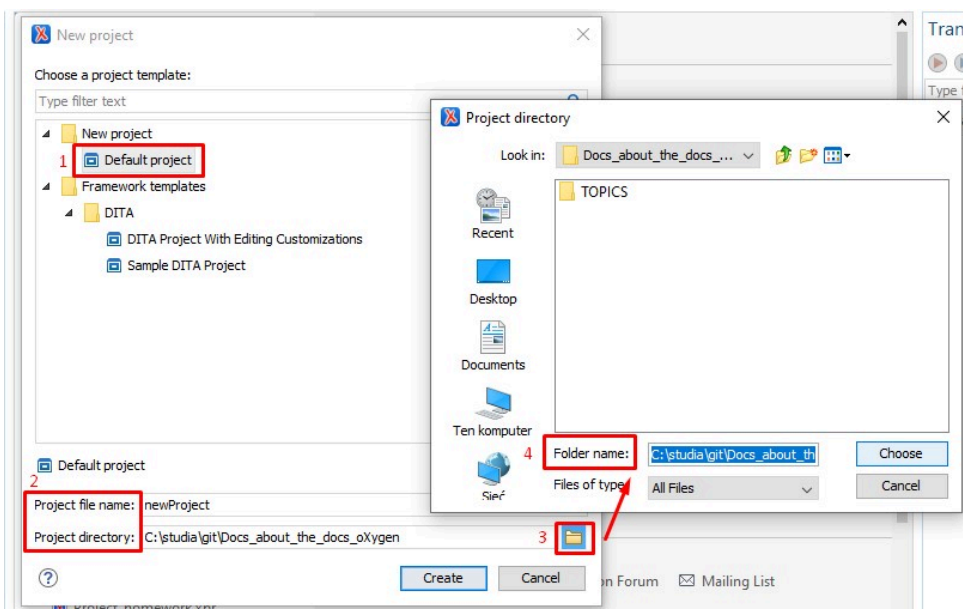


Figure 9: Project File Name

3. Your **Project Folder** is created and ready to build.

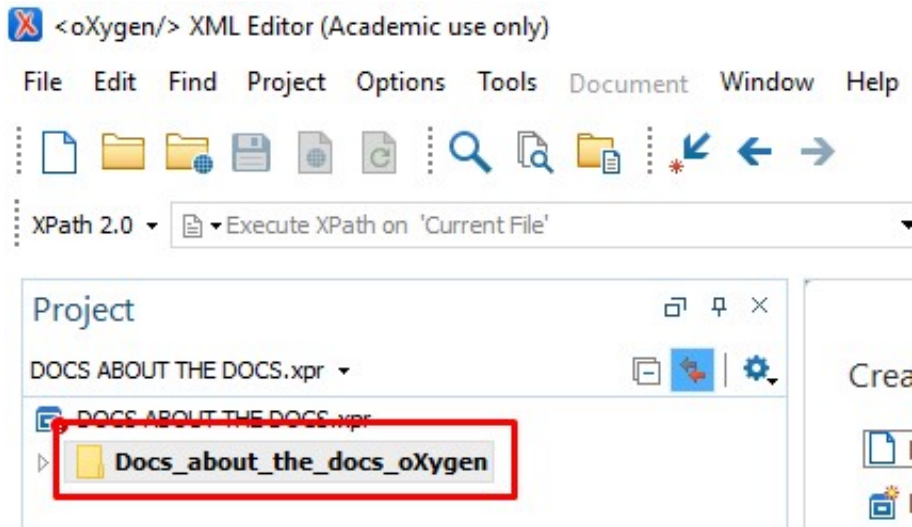


Figure 10: New Project Folder

4. Next create **TOPICS Folder** where you keep all DITA Topic Types. Right-click PROJECT NAME and choose **New → Folder → Folder name: TOPICS → OK**. This is the Folder for DITA Topics.

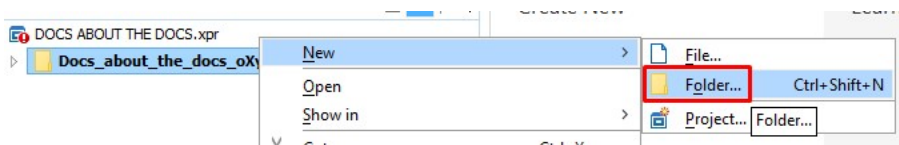


Figure 11: New TOPICS Folder

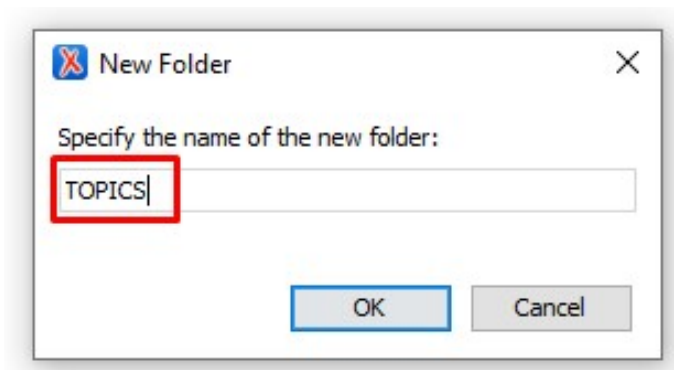


Figure 12: TOPICS Folder

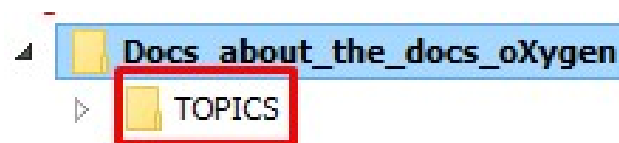


Figure 13: TOPICS

5. To keep images under control you need to create another Folder for IMAGES. It is the same way as TOPICS. Right-click the project PROJECT NAME and choose **New → Folder → Folder name: IMAGES → OK**.

6. Creating a DITA Topic in Oxygen XML Editor

Right-click the TOPIC Folder, select **New** → **File** → **Concept** → **Title** → **File name** → **Create**



Note: When name the **File neme** add “c_” at the beginning of your file name. 'c_' means **Concept**

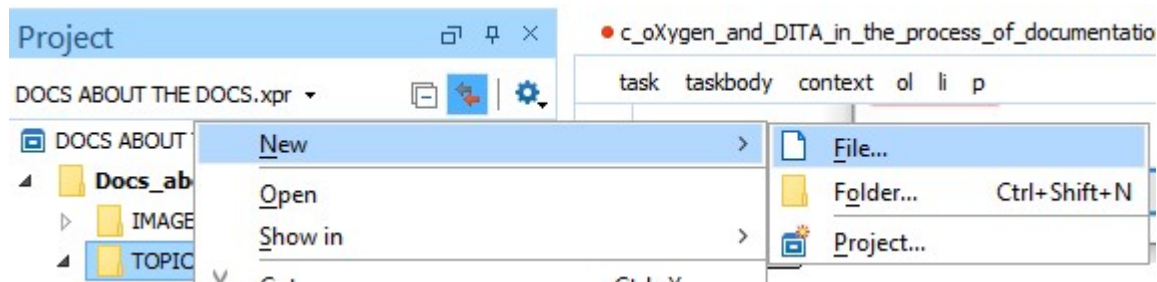
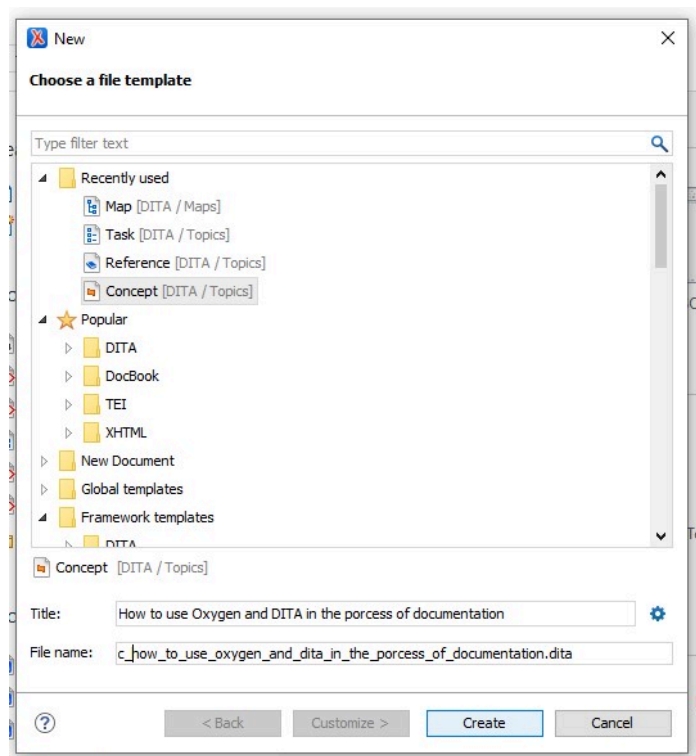


Figure 14: New File TOPIC



7. Add some text to the Concept. Instert the cursor in the **p** element and press **Enter**. oXygen shows you which elements you can place in the current position

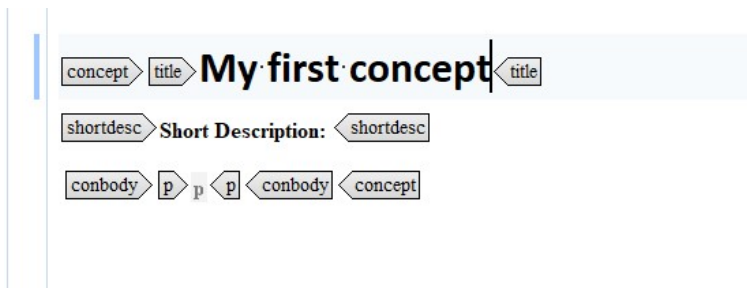


Figure 15: Adding some text to Concept

Concept elements often used

- Sections <section>: Includes <title>
- Paragraphs <p>
- Lists: unordered , ordered , definition lists <dl>
- Tables <table>
- Images <fig> or <image>
- Code blocks <codeblock>
- Code phrases <codeph>
- Phrases <ph>, keywords <keyword> and terms <term>

CREATING YOUR FIRST *TASK TOPIC*

This section shows how to create a new file **Task Topic** in oXygen XML Editor.

It presents the quick step-by-step guide how to produce Task Topic.

To create **Task Topic** right-click on the **Project Folder** (created at the beginning) for options and select **New** → **File** → **Task**. Now add a **Title** of the **Task** file and **File name**. Click **Create** button.



Note: When name the **File name** add '**t_**' at the beginning of **File name**. '**t_**' means **Task**Producing a lot of topics one can be confused which file is for which topic, but putting the first letters before the name helps to know which topic is for Task '**t_**' and distinguish from the rest.

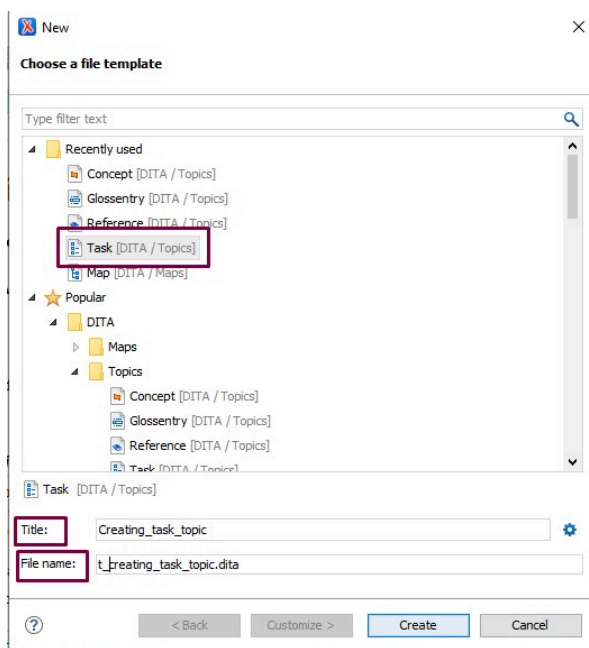


Figure 16: Creating Task Topic

Adding the content

In **Author** mode place the cursor between for example **p** element (it can be any element) and press **Enter**. When you press **Enter**, Oxygen XML Editor shows you a list of elements you can use in this location. Choose the element you want to use and press **Enter** to insert the element.

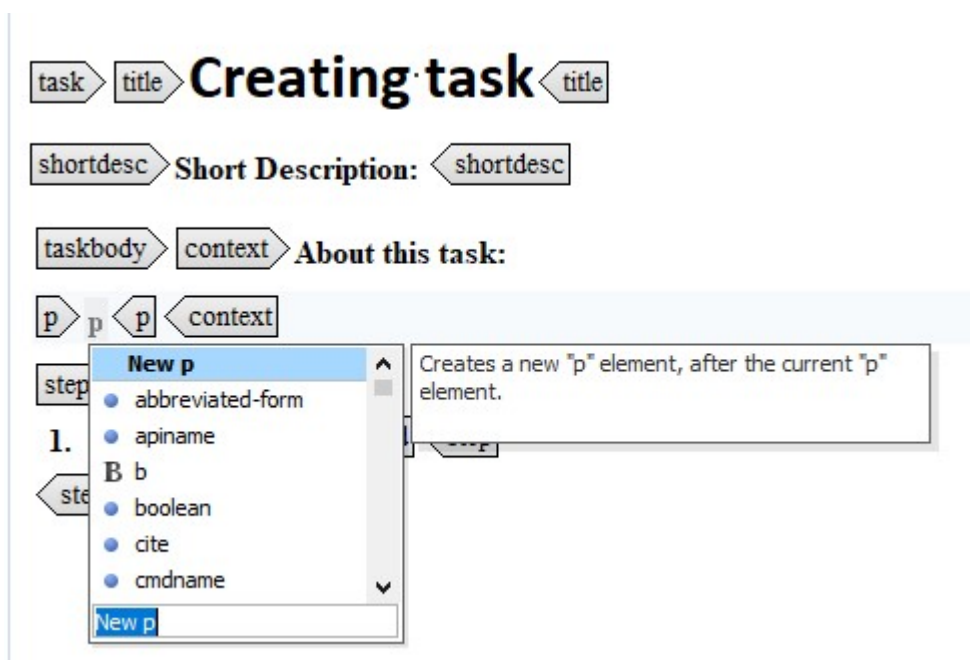


Figure 17: Adding a context

A list of frequent elements used in **Task Topic**

- Prerequisites <prereq>
- Contextual information <context>
- Steps <steps>

- Results <result>
- Example <example>
- Post requisites <postreq>

CREATING YOUR FIRST *Concept Topic*

This section shows how to create a new file **Concept Topic** in oXygen XML Editor.

To create **Concept Topic** right-click on the **Project Folder** (created at the beginning) for options and select **New** → **File** → **Concept**. Now add a **Title** of the **Concept** file and **File name**. Click **Create** button.



Note: When name the **File name** add 'c_' at the beginning of **File name**. 'c_' means **Concept**. It helps to know which topic is for concept 'c_'.

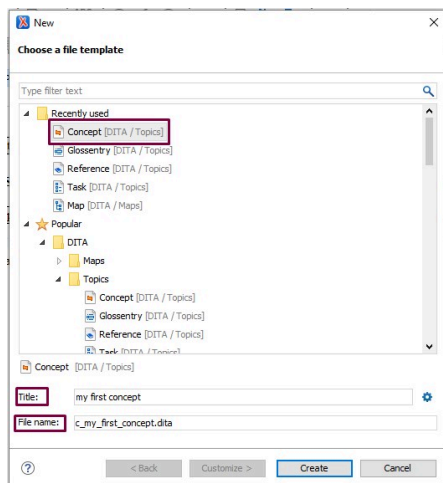


Figure 18: Creating Concept Topic

Below you see the **File editor** in oXygen XML Editor where you write your content.

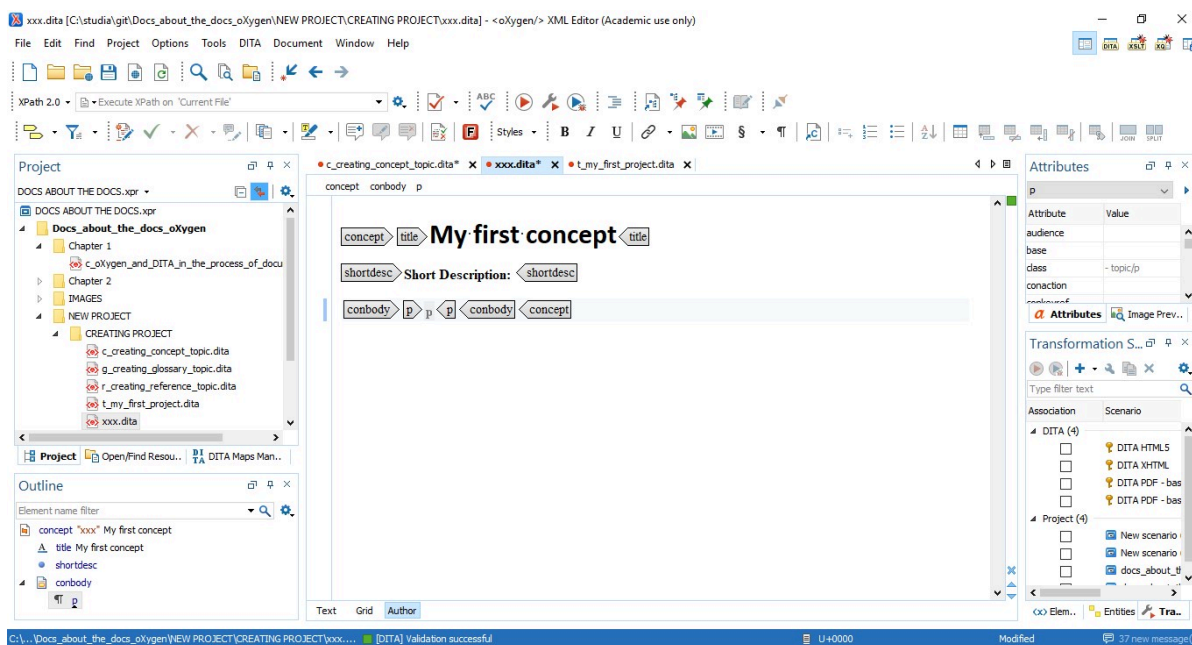


Figure 19: oXygen view

Adding the content

In **Author mode** place the cursor between **p** element and press **Enter**. When you press **Enter**, Oxygen XML Editor shows you a list of elements you can use in this location. Choose the element you want to use and press **Enter** to insert the element.



Note: When you use a computer mouse, double click on the chosen option.

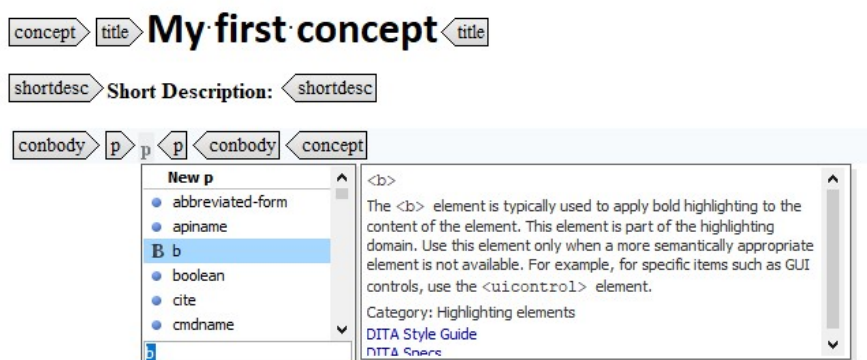


Figure 20: Adding a content in Author mode

A list of frequent elements used in **Concept Topic**

- Sections **<section>** Include **Title**
- Paragraphs **<p>**
- Unordered list ****
- Ordered list ****
- Definition list **<dl>**
- Tables **<table>**
- Images **<fig>** or **<image>**
- Code blocks **<codeblock>**
- Code phrases **<codeph>**
- Phrases **<ph>**
- Keywords **<keyword>**
- Terms **<term>**

CREATING YOUR FIRST *REFERENCE TOPIC*

This section shows how to create a new file **Reference Topic** in oXygen XML Editor.

To create **Concept Topic** right-click on the **Project Folder** (created at the beginning) for options and select **New** → **File** → **Reference**. Now add a **Title** of the **Reference file** and **File name**. Click **Create** button.



Note: When name the **File name** add **'r_'** at the beginning of **File name**. **'r_'** means **Reference**It helps to know which topic is for Reference **'r_'**.

Adding a table

Place the cursor inside an element in Author mode and press **Enter** and next select **Table**. Add some information in **Description** **<desc>** and add **Entry** in the table.

Table 2: My first table

This is a table in Reference Topic

Content 1	Content 2
1 A	1 A
2 B	2 B

Adding a picture

1. Create an **IMAGES** folder in the Project . The **IMAGES** folder should contain all your images.



Notice: Add images to the folder on your hard disk.

2. Place the cursor inside an element in Author mode and press **Enter** and next select **Image**. Then, choose the **image location** , add **Figure title**, and set up a **size** and click **Insert**..

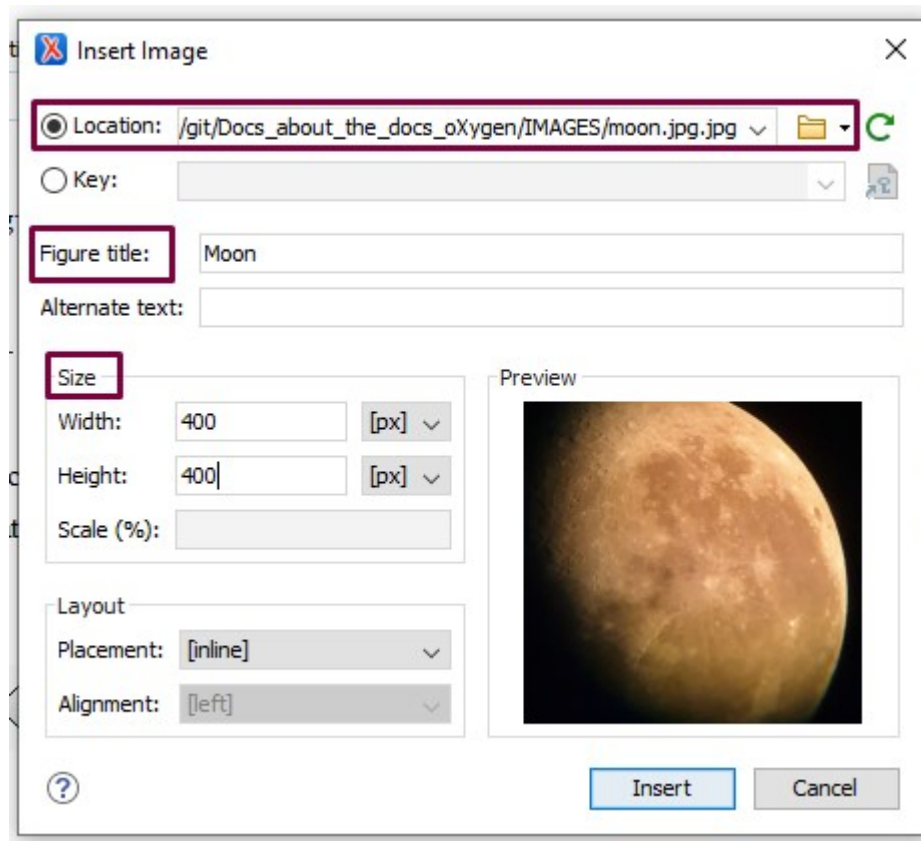


Figure 21: Adding a picture

The picture should look as the example below.



Figure 22: Moon

Notes

A **<note>** element contains information that expands on or calls attention to a particular point. This information is typically differentiated from the main text. To set **Attributes** go to Author mode and press **Enter** inside an element and select **Note** element. On the right you see **Attribute**box with different attributes. Scroll down and choose the attribute **Type** and set the **Value** by clicking on the **Value** place.

See [The type attribute](#) for more detailed information on values.



Figure 23: NOTES Attributes

Here are examples of **Notes**



Note: This is a standard note.



Attention: This is an aexample of *attention* note



CAUTION: This is an aexample of *caution* note



DANGER: This is an aexample of *danger* note



Fastpath: This is an aexample of *fastpath* note



Important: This is an aexample of *important* note



Notice: This is an aexample of *notice* note



Remember: This is an aexample of *remember* note



Warning: This is an aexample of *warning* note

CREATING DITA MAP

This is the instruction how to create DITA Map

DITA Map organizes a set of topics into a hierarchy. The structure of the map presents the structure of the table of contents of a document.

We use DITA maps to:

- Include topics within an information set
- Define the navigation between a set of topics
- Creates relationships between topics

Right-click your Project view and select **New** → **File**



Note: If you want to have your files organized create your DITA Map outside of the TOPICS Folder. Click on the Project Folder.

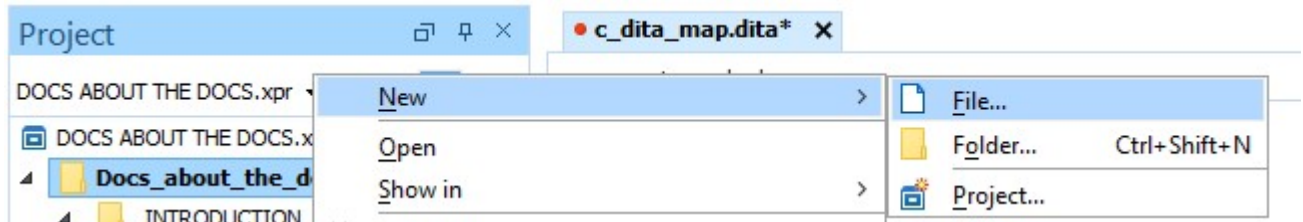


Figure 24: DITA Map

Now go to **Framework templates** → **DITA** → **Maps** and select **Map**.

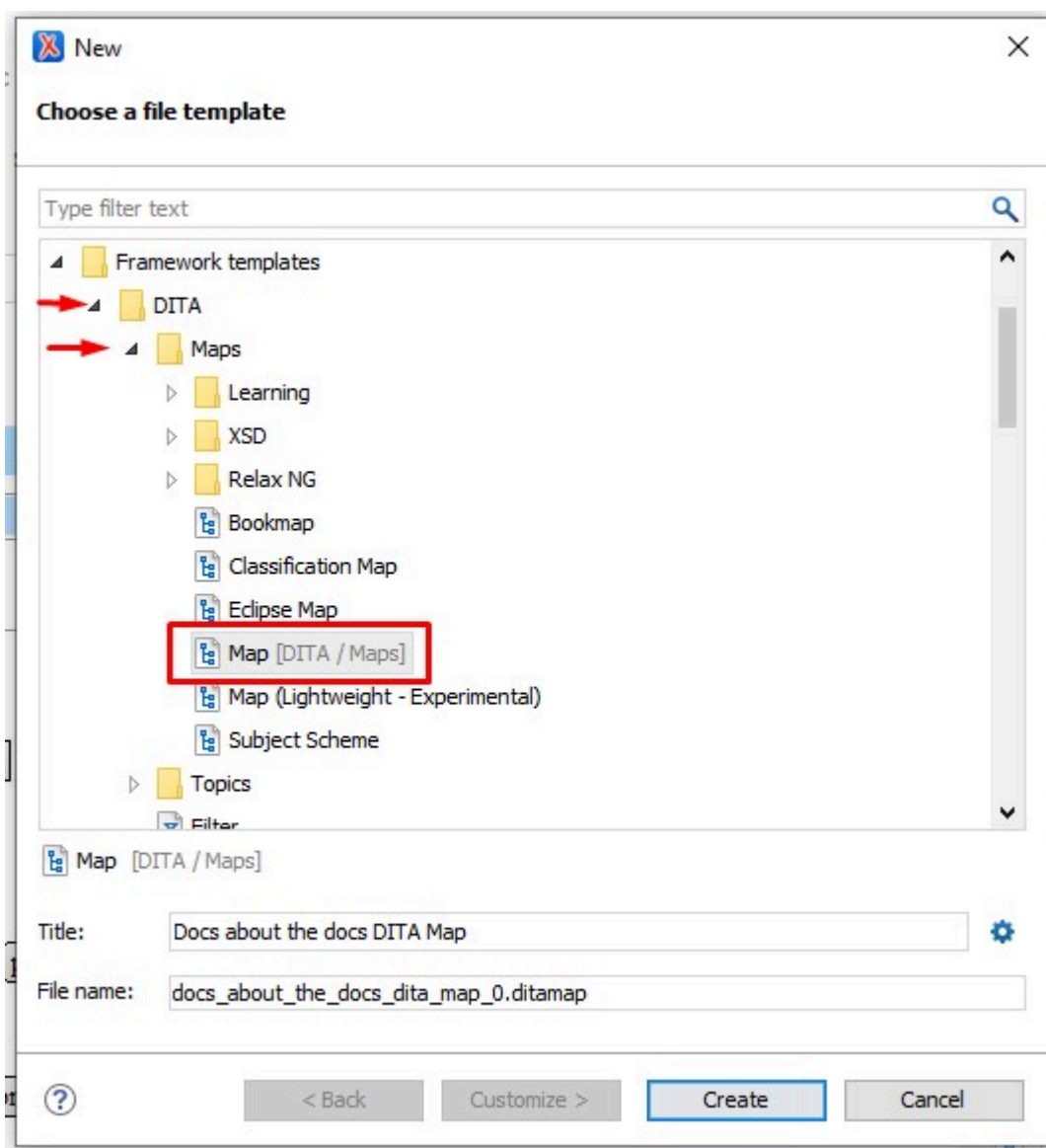


Figure 25: DITA Maps

Add a Title and click **Create**.

After creating DITA Map you get the question *Where do you want the DITA map file to be opened?*

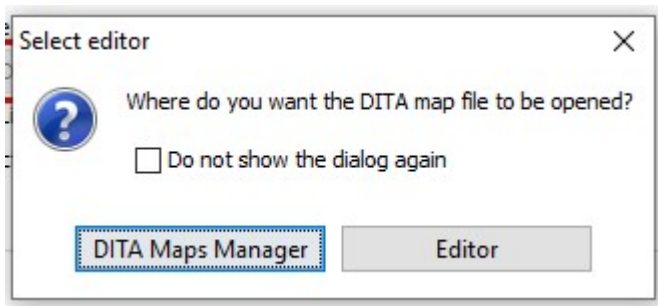


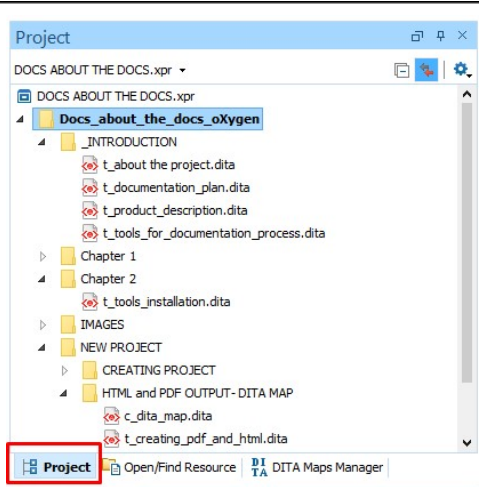
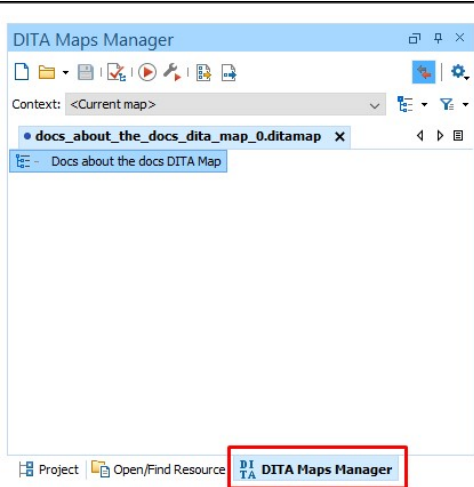
Figure 26: DITA Maps Manager

Choose whether you want to open the map in the **Editor** or in the DITA Maps Manager. Maps Manager presents a graphical representation that can be easier to manipulate for a beginner writer. The **DITA Maps Manager** presents a view of the DITA map that is similar to a table of contents.



Tip: Look below at the pictures to find the location of your Project and DITA Map.

Table 3: Project and DITA Map Location

PROJECT Location	DITA Map Location
	

The table above presents the location of your Project Files and DITA Map File. When you want to open Project files click on Project at the bottom, but when you want to open DITA Map click on DITA Map Manager (marked red).

ELEMENTS YOU CAN ADD TO A DITA MAP

Here you see the screenshot of DITA Map ELEMENTS

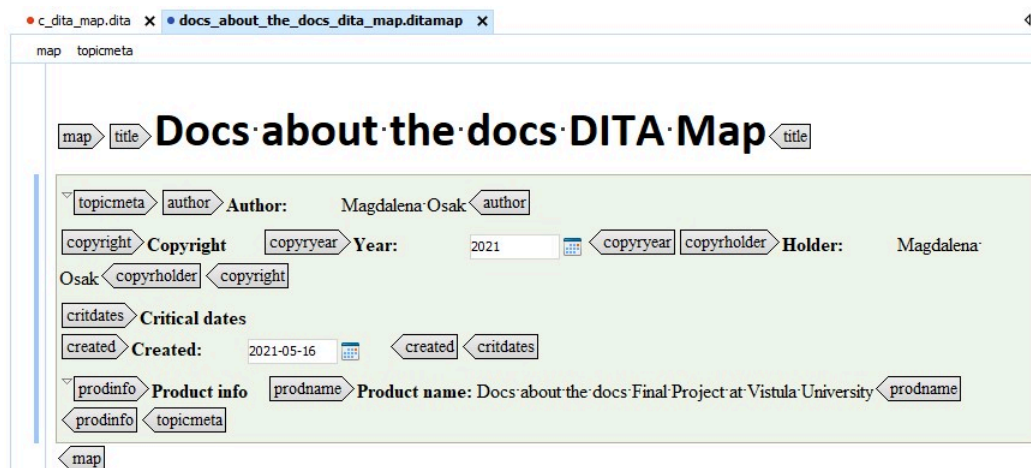


Figure 27: DITA Map Elements

This is the list of some elements in DITA Map you can add

- **Title** defines the title of your Project
- **Topic Meta** includes *author*, *copyright*, *critdates* and *proinfo*
- **Topic references** or **topicref** create the whole structure of the document that you want to deliver. The DITA map has a **topicref** element for each topic which are nested. See the picture below.



Remember: DITA Map has the extension .ditamap.

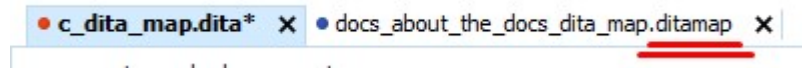


Figure 28: DITA Map EXTENSION

TOPIC REFERENCES IN DITA Map

Add your Topics to DITA Map Manager using drag and drop option

Follow the steps to insert the topics

1. Open the DITA Map you have created
2. Go to Project View (you have to be able to click on the topics)
3. Drag the Topic and Drop in the DITA Map

See the pictures below and repeat this

Table 4: Drag and drop topics into the DITA Map

DRAG A TOPIC	DROP A TOPIC

CREATING PDF and HTML OUTPUT

This is the procedure how to create and publish your first DITA Map

Here you find the steps to generate HTML output and PDF file.



Tip: I recommend to create your DITA Map outside the TOPICS to be sure about file paths.

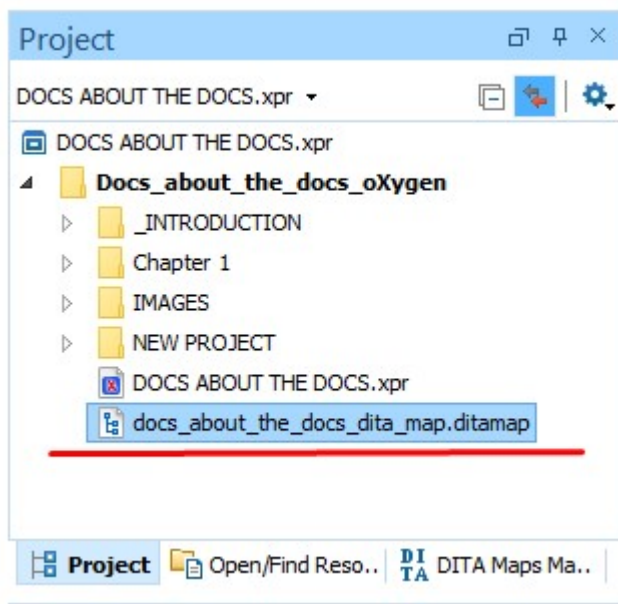



Figure 29: DITA Map Location

To publish a DITA Map as **WebHelp Responsive HTML5** output, follow these steps:

1.

Go to **Transformation Scenerios** on the right side. Click  and select **DITA-OT transformation**.

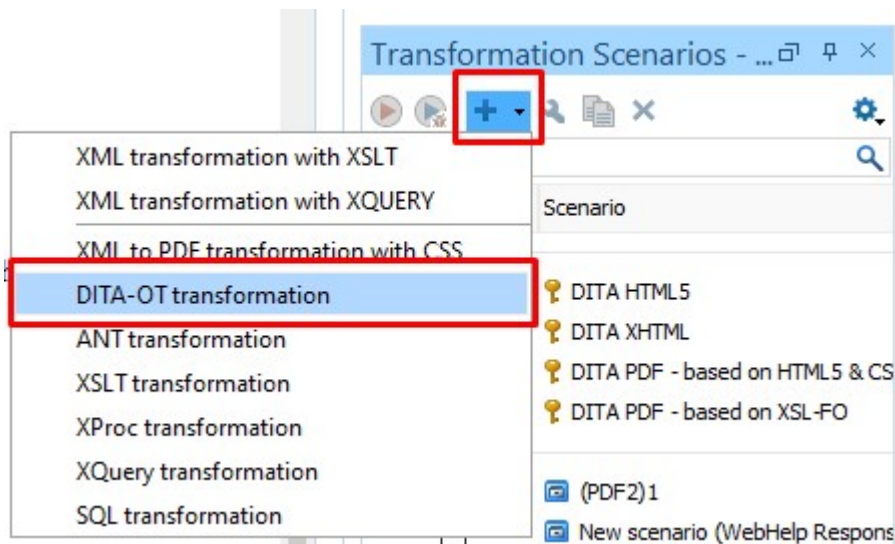


Figure 30: DITA Transformation Scenerios

2. Next select the desire output, now we create WebHelp Responsive.

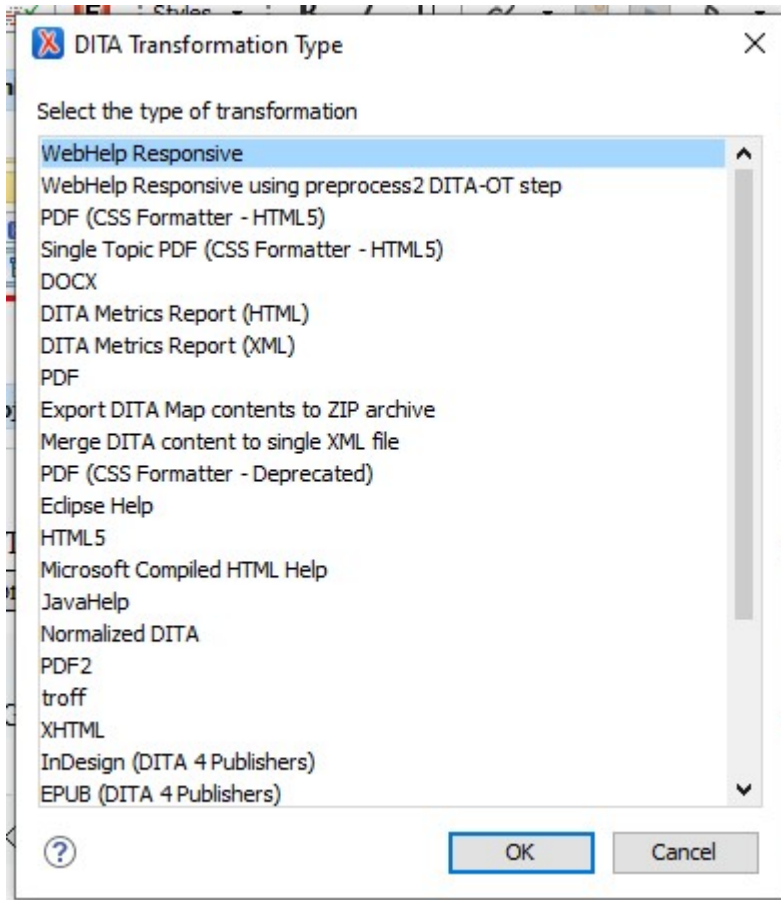


Figure 31: WebHelp Responsive

3. Now configure Publishing Scenerios where the output is generated.

WHAT TO DO	OUTPUT SETTINGS TAB
<p>a. Give a name to your Scenerio</p> <p>b. Go to Output and edit Temporary file directory and Output directory</p> <p>c. Create seperate folder for Temporary file directory and seperate one for Output directory.</p>	

4. **Temporary file directory** is necessary to store pre-processed temporary files. **Output directory** is the place where the content of the final output is stored. In the picture you can see the folders created by me. It is important to have it named with **temporary** and **output**

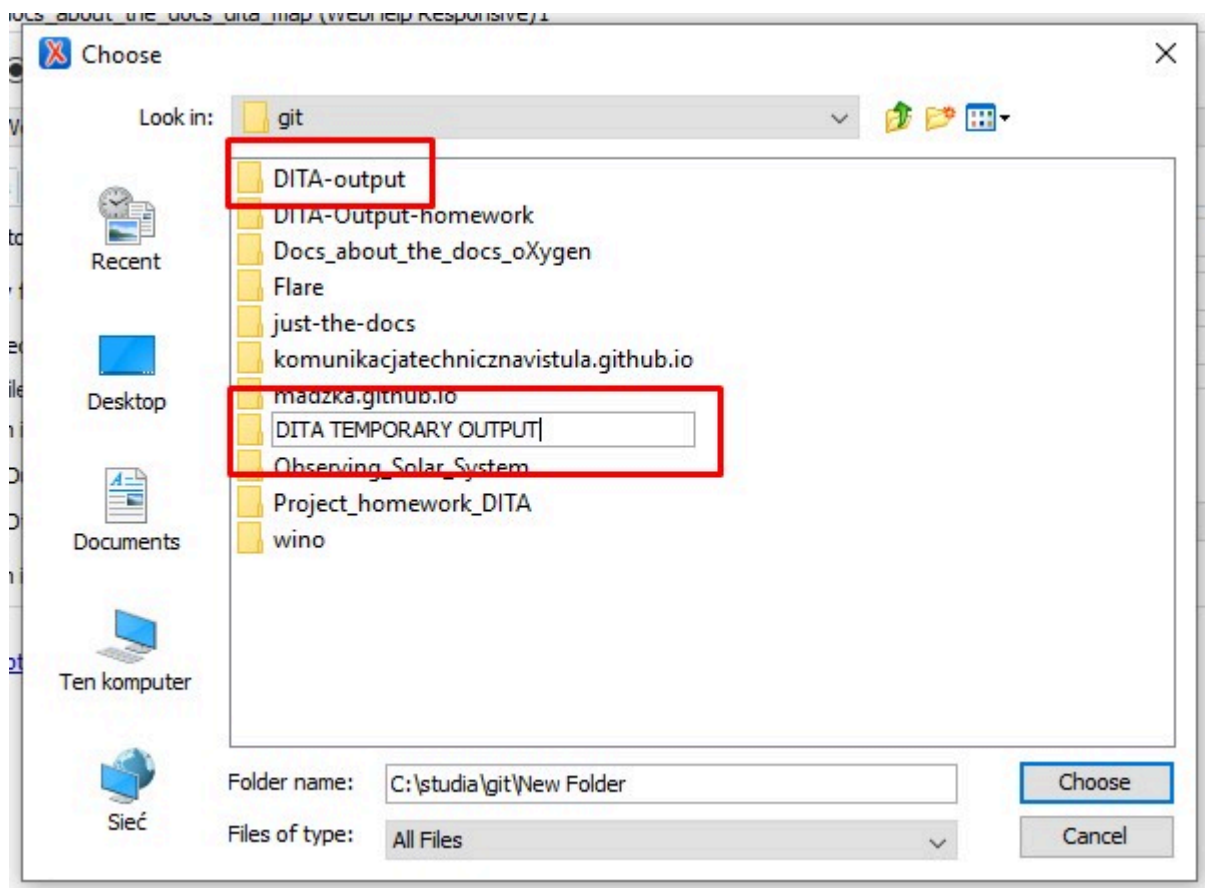


Figure 32: DITA Outputs

5. When it is ready, click **OK**.

6. Next select the template and click **OK**.

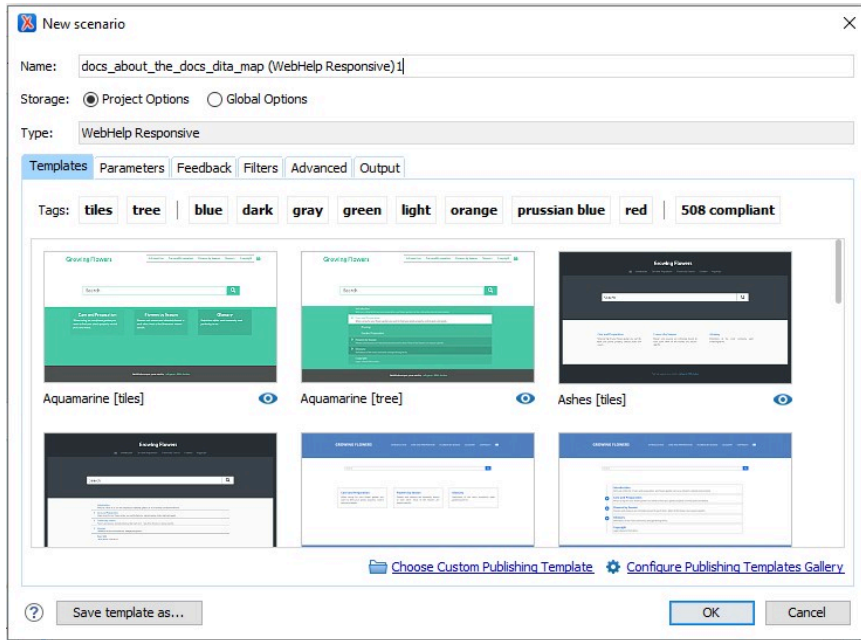


Figure 33: WebHelp Template