

Towards more effective adoption of OER by integrating implementation of Open Science and Open Education

Next to the UNESCO Recommendation on OER, UNESCO also launched a draft Recommendation on Open Science last year. Comparing these recommendations with those from the OER Recommendation, they have a large resemblance, although in the latter more emphasis was placed on cost effectiveness. In the Recommendation, OER is considered as one of the elements comprising Open Science, next to a.o. Open Data and Open Access.

However, in daily practice in Dutch institutions of Higher Education we observe that implementation to adopt outcome of both Open Science (more specifically Open Access and Open Data) and Open Education (more specifically OER) are often separated. This is remarkable, because there are a lot of similarities between the two phenomena. The challenges and dilemmas in both fields are similar: fear of commercial use of openly available resources, fear of free riding, uncertainty about copyright issues and fear of harming your career when involved in openness. This fear can also be looked at from a broader perspective, where being involved in education is considered harmful for a scientific career.

We can also learn from each other. For scientific publications, there is an internationally recognized, highly developed and well-functioning ecosystem. This ecosystem ensures scientific progress. In the case of OER, such an ecosystem does not yet exist, and the ecosystem to be developed should be linked to the existing education and training ecosystems. The ecosystem for scientific publications comprises for instance a transparent and recognized quality assurance system based on peer review. Therefore, anyone interested in a publication has the certainty that the publication meets a minimum quality standard. OER could consider a similar quality system. Many institutions and communities of teachers are currently building their own quality assurance system for learning material, but criteria and procedures for OER to take into account are often unknown. As a result, users of OER remain uncertain about their quality, and will have to make greater efforts to determine whether the learning materials they find actually meet quality standards they expect or need. On top of that, OER could adopt a system with digital object identifiers in order to make the educational output of academics visible and rewardable.

As part of the Acceleration Plan for Educational Innovation with IT, the program focusing on digital (open) learning material is working towards a more integrated approach to accelerate adoption of both Open Access publications and OER. In a symposium with stakeholders from institutions and associations of institutions we will formulate an action plan for further uptake.

In this session, we will inform participants about our activities and intermediate results. We will invite participants to share their efforts, results and discuss ideas to approach the two forms of openness in a more integrated way.