

FROM LECTURER PROFESSIONALISATION TO EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

by **Janina van Hees**

This year, SURF has inventoried how ICT lecturer professionalisation is organised in the Dutch higher education sector and which themes are addressed. For the purposes of this article, an examination has been conducted into the reference points that the research report offers with respect to open and online education.

Research structure

Researchers Ineke Lam and Riekje de Jong of Utrecht University have collected data from ICT contact persons and contact persons who are responsible for teaching qualification programmes at a total of 35 research universities and universities of applied sciences. Firstly, they painted a rough picture of the way in which lecturers' ICT skills are incorporated in professionalisation policy. Subsequently, based on the data from the inventory, nine good practices were established.

Open and online education as a theme in lecturer professionalisation

Amongst other issues, the study (Lam & De Jong, 2015) examines the boundaries of the theme of ICT and education within the lecturer-professionalisation process. An interesting conclusion is that more than half of the institutions who have responded to the survey, say their institution has included blended learning as a theme in the teaching qualification programmes. By contrast, OER and MOOCs are included in the training much less frequently. Another notable factor was that 'flipping the classroom' and digital feedback are more frequently incorporated into training at universities of applied sciences compared to research universities (see table 1).

Priorities for 2015-2018

In addition, a survey was conducted into ICT & education themes that are central to the surveyed institutions in the period 2015-2018. The information gathered from this survey is displayed in table 2.

This table shows that within universities of applied sciences, blended learning and digital learning & working environments are the most frequently mentioned subjects. At all of the research universities surveyed, the themes of digital learning & working environments and digital testing were on the future agenda. Web lectures, blended learning, 'flipping the classroom' and online learning are also high on the priority list. OER and, in higher professional education, MOOCs are mentioned far less frequently.

Designing education	hbo (higher professional education) (n=17)	wo (academic education) (n=11)
digital learning and working environment/ virtual learning environment	12	8
blended learning	11	7
online learning	8	5
open educational resources	4	2
MOOCs	4	0
other	6	4
Teaching and supervising students/provision of education		
blended learning	14	7
flipping the classroom	13	4
digital feedback	11	0
web lectures	6	5
other	12	8
Testing & assessment		
digital portfolio	11	3
digital testing	9	7
other	13	4

Table 1: ICT themes included in the teaching qualification programmes.

ICT priority topics in 2015-2018	hbo (higher professional education) (n=21)	wo (academic education) (n=14)
blended learning	17	12
digital learning and working environment/VLE	17	14
digital testing	13	14
flipping the classroom	12	11
web lectures	11	13
online learning	10	11
open educational resources (OER)	8	5
MOOCs	7	10
other	4	5

Table 2. ICT and education themes that are central to institutions in the period 2015-2018.

Comparison of the subjects and the priorities shows that the themes relating to open and online education play a more important role in the institutions' future agendas than in the current list of lecturer-professionalisation themes. For example, respondents from 11 of the 14 research universities indicated that 'flipping the classroom' will be an important theme in the coming period. However, table 1 – which displays the current ICT themes included in the courses – shows that this theme is incorporated into the current training programmes much less frequently. This also applies for the themes of web lectures and MOOCs. Presumably, the professionalisation agenda has become somewhat outdated. Reassessment of the training programme in the short term could therefore be useful.

Concrete development of education is more important than training

The report then presents nine good practices for ICT lecturer professionalisation at the institutional and programme level. One of the most interesting concluding observations indicates that concrete development of education is in fact more important than training: "A number of good practices advocate a professionalisation concept that mainly consists of lecturers helping each other to develop ICT-integrated education, assisted by both ICT- and educational support officers. The professionalisation concept therefore consists of collaborative development or co-creation rather than 'training'. This therefore shows a development towards professional learning communities."

Are these kinds of learning communities for lecturers a trend within lecturer professionalisation? Right now, there is not enough evidence for this. However, the report does indicate that these learning communities may be a promising concept and could also be a key factor in successful further training of lecturers in the use of open and online education.



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Literature

- Lam, I. en De Jong, R. (2015). Van docentprofessionalisering naar onderwijsontwikkeling. Inventarisatie van de status quo van ICT-docentprofessionalisering'. Utrecht 2015, p. 13. Available at <https://www.surf.nl/binaries/content/assets/surf/nl/kennisbank/2015/rapport-inventarisatie-ict-docentprofessionalisering.pdf>.
- In the autumn of 2015, Ineke Lam and Riekje de Jong are expected to publish a discussion paper on this theme. This paper will be published in SURF's Knowledge Base.