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A small project and a big venture: sharing practices between two different scale OER developments

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Abstract

A small project and a big venture: sharing practices between two different scale OER developments

Sharing knowledge between OER initiatives and the reality of what actually happens in practice can lead to the fostering of openness amongst yet further initiatives and consequently enable our communities of practice to grow (Lane and Darby, 2012). Such knowledge sharing and learning of valuable lessons involves OER projects both large and small; projects ranging from those involving a few individuals, to those based in departments, and covering discipline areas as well as those that have arisen as a result of large institutional OER investments. This paper sets out to offer insight into, and contrast, the practices and knowledge sharing of two very different UK based OER projects: the internationally recognised OpenLearn project (McAndrew et al, 2009), established by the Open University in 2006 and the smaller scale Open Resource Bank for Interactive Teaching (ORBIT) project established at the University of Cambridge in 2012 (Hassler at al, 2012). In turn it highlights the other initiatives that informed or were informed by these two projects.

On the one hand we provide a direct comparison between OpenLearn, established at a University as a big institutional approach and aiming to reach a broad academic audience, with ORBIT, developed as a small specialised project within a Faculty of Education and focused on a more targeted audience: that of primary and secondary school teachers of mathematics and science, and teacher educators in those areas. On the other hand we set out the expectations of the principal stakeholders - learners and educators – as well as mapping out the wide range of other projects and initiatives that they shared knowledge with and vice versa. If we are to understand and facilitate the spread of open practice, it is important to examine the knowledge sharing practices and approaches of both small-scale and large-scale ventures as well as the role of knowledge brokers.

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Twitter abstract:
Reflections on sharing practices between two different scale OER developments and other initiatives

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