

Open Educational Practices?

Although open educational resources (OER) are high on the agenda of social and inclusion policies and supported by many stakeholders in the educational sphere, their use in higher education and adult education has not yet reached the critical threshold. This poses an obstacle to seamless provision of high quality learning resources and practices.

Open educational practices (OEP) are defined as the use of OER to raise the quality of education and training, and innovate educational practices on an institutional, professional and individual level.

OEP are practices which support the production, use and reuse of OER through institutional policies, promote innovative pedagogical models, and respect and empower learners as co-producers on their lifelong learning path. OEP address the whole OER governance community: policy makers, managers and administrators of organisations, educational professionals and learners.

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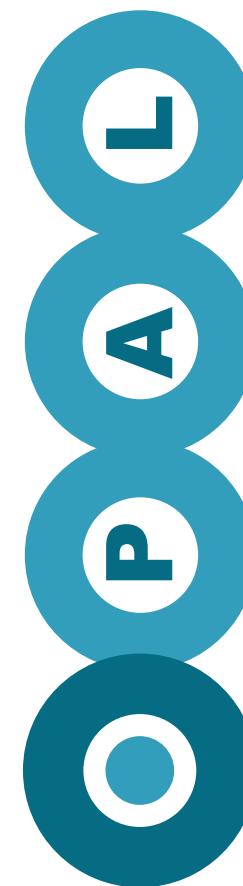
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OPEN EDUCATIONAL QUALITY INITIATIVE

OPAL aims to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning in higher and adult education by enhancing quality, innovation and transparency.

What is OPAL?

The Open Educational Quality Initiative (OPAL) is an international network formed to promote innovation and improved quality in education and training through the use of open educational resources (OER).

OPAL tools

On the basis of analysis of international case studies the OPAL Initiative has concluded that it is necessary to move from a paradigm of providing better access to open educational resources to a new paradigm of open educational practices, in order to guarantee the uptake of OER in education.

OPAL is currently working on quality guidelines and self-assessment tools which show how existing educational practices in higher education and adult education can be opened to integrate OER and improve the quality of learning experiences.

OPAL will provide tools including a clearinghouse of good open educational practices, a register of international champions of open educational practices, quality guidelines, and a self-assessment concept for organisations, individuals, teaching practice and policy.

What are the benefits of OPAL?

The "Open Educational Quality Initiative" will help to boost the use and acceptance of OER in Europe and beyond, by establishing a European Quality environment for individuals, organisations and policy makers, helping them to identify their open educational practices.

Educational organisations will benefit from new guidelines for quality of OER as levers for innovation of learning experiences embedded into long-term educational objectives.

Learners will benefit from the uptake of open educational practices in education and training systems through the provision of a clear quality infrastructure, including a quality handbook, an award and a quality clearinghouse.

Learners will benefit from open educational practices because OPAL will help them to identify high quality resources and methodologies for defining, identifying and developing quality in their learning scenarios.

Policy makers will directly benefit from OPAL through policy seminars in which open educational practices will be presented in order to derive quality and innovation potential from the actual successful use and innovative integration of OER in educational scenarios. Special attention will be paid to groups at risk of exclusion.

Educational professionals will benefit from easy to use tools which help to establish innovative practices or services, and will have a multiplier effect and result in greater knowledge about the use of open educational practices.

Researchers will benefit from new analysis and consolidated evidence on the added-value and impact of OER, with particular attention to institutional as well as pedagogical innovation and change through open educational practices.

OER initiatives will benefit from linking and connecting learning communities in the field of OER in order to form a European consultative group for quality of open educational practices and building partnerships to establish a new international quality consensus.



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