Role of Open Badges in open non-formal learning

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About Project ReOPEN
Recognition of Valid and Open Learning

• Programme is co-funded by the Erasmus + programme of the European Union

• Time frame: 01-11-2016 to 31-10-2018

• Consortium members:
  • Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas
  • ONECO
  • ESCP Europe Wirtschaftshochschule
  • Q21 - Agentur für Qualifizierungs und Transfermanagement GmbH
  • SRCE - Sveuciliste u Zagrebu Sveucilisni Racunski Centar
  • EDEN - European Distance and e-Learning Network
Priorities addressed

• Open and innovative education, training and youth work, embedded in the digital era

• Transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications to facilitate learning, employability and labour mobility

• Access to training and qualifications for all through C-VET
Opening up challenges

- Curriculum opening up through:
  - Open Educational Resources
  - Massive open online courses
  - Open collaboration and communication among teachers and learners
  - Creating innovative education services for diverse learning groups
  - Recognition and validation of non-formal open learning
Project scope

• Addressing objectives of "Opening Up"

• Implementing recommendations of EC JRC research study on “Validation of Non-formal MOOC – based Learning” (2016) by
  – establishing validated open learning practices
  – offering learner credentials for online and open learning (OOL) curriculum:
    • verification of learner identity
    • setting learning agreement and other instruments
    • establishing digital badges for recognition of learning achievements
  – establishing collaboration with institutions to provide transparent information on potential recognition of OOL
  – providing T&T with the tools for OOL development and recognition
Aims and objectives

ReOPEN project aims to create instruments to develop validated OOL for recognition of prior and non-formal learning.

The aim will be reached through the following objectives:

1. To design a platform for non-formal open learning curriculum (e.g. MOOC) development with learning validation and recognition instruments [http://reopen.eu/learn/]

2. To train T&TT at C-VET organizations, companies, HE institutions and adult learning organizations (created learning materials, organized T&TT)

3. To exploit the new platform and to design non-formal open learning courses for continuous professional staff developing (CPD) applying learning recognition instruments for validated non-formal open learning

4. To establish partnership for future collaboration for non-formal open learning recognition (reviewing curriculum in partner institutions and preparing information on potential recognition of open learning)
Assignment 1

• What does open mean to you?
• Go to https://answergarden.ch/603336 and write your answers
• One word per answer
Open learning

• The term generally refers to activities that either enhance learning opportunities within formal education systems or broaden learning opportunities beyond formal education systems. While there is no agreed-upon, comprehensive definition of open learning, central focus is commonly placed on the "needs of the learner as perceived by the learner"

• An approach to learning that gives students flexibility and choice over what, when, at what pace, where, and how they learn

• Some Principles of Open Learning
  – Learners accessing freely available online content
  – Learners enrolling on free open/distance learning courses
  – Learners collaborating on open knowledge-building projects
  – Learners sharing outcomes with one another
# Types of open learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Open Education, Open Universities</th>
<th>MOOCs</th>
<th>OER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definition of open</strong></td>
<td>No start qualifications</td>
<td>No course fees</td>
<td>Free to (re)use and (re)distribute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Certificates</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Degrees</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target group</strong></td>
<td>Students, learners</td>
<td>Learners</td>
<td>Learners and educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main objects</strong></td>
<td>Programmes</td>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>Learning objects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on de Lange & van den Bosch, 2013
Continuum of formality:

Informal learning is learning that occurs in daily life, in the family, in the workplace, in communities and through interests and activities of individuals.

Non-formal learning is learning that has been acquired in addition or alternatively to formal learning. In some cases, it is also structured according to educational and training arrangements, but more flexible. It usually takes place in community-based settings, the workplace and through the activities of civil society organisations.

Formal learning takes place in education and training institutions, is recognised by relevant national authorities and leads to diplomas and qualifications. Formal learning is structured according to educational arrangements such as curricula, qualifications and teaching-learning requirements.
# Formal vs non-formal learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Formal</th>
<th>Non-formal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purposes</strong></td>
<td>Long-term &amp; general</td>
<td>Short-term &amp; specific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timing</strong></td>
<td>Long cycle/preparatory/</td>
<td>Short-cycle/recurrent/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>1. Standardised/input centred</td>
<td>1. Individualised/output centred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Academic</td>
<td>2. Practical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Entry requirements determine</td>
<td>3. Clientele determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Delivery system</strong></td>
<td><em>Institution based, isolated from environment, rigidly structured, more</em></td>
<td><em>Environment based</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>teacher centred &amp; resource intensive</em></td>
<td><em>Community related</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>[Adopted from: Harrison, 2012]</em></td>
<td><em>Flexible, learner centred &amp; resource saving</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control</strong></td>
<td>External/hierarchical</td>
<td>Self-governing/democratic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adopted from: Harrison, 2012)
Structural features of open non-formal course

- Learning needs and expectations
- Curriculum
- Delivery
- Assessment
- Certification

Non-formal open learning programme

Please refer to TM1 of ReOPEN project for further details, references, etc.

M. Teresevičienė, VMU
Assignment 3

• How would you like to learn? What is your preference?
• Go to https://answergarden.ch/603392

• Time for learning – how long should the course last? 2 weeks? 3 months?...
• Intensity – how many hours could you spend for learning per week?
• Synchronous or asynchronous consultations
• Individual tasks or groups activities?
• Learning material - downloadable or accessible online? Adapted for mobile learning? More readings, videos or learn by doing activities?
Assignment 3- share your experience

• How often do you participate in open non formal learning?
• How important to you is get credentials for such learning?
• Did you get recognition of such learning so far?
• Did you earn some digital badges?
Why open non formal learning should be recognized?

• Increased variety of learning possibilities available to everyone
  – smaller, shorter in duration
  – flexible pathways to learning
  – accessible affordable learning

• Need for continuous personal development

• Competent and skilled students, workers, citizens
  – Can progress in their work
  – Can get better job
  – Can build better society

• Through recognition of non formal open learning individuals can gain access to programmes offered by educational institutions

• Registered students can be exempted from part of the programme in order to be fast-tracked through their studies
Digital badge - definition

• A digital badge is a validated indicator of accomplishment, skill, quality, or interest that can be earned in many learning environments and communicated across contexts such as academic and work related contexts.

• Open digital badging makes it easy for anyone to issue, earn, and display badges across the web—through an infrastructure that uses shared and open technical standards.
What is badge constituted of:

- Recipient details
- Issuer details (name, contact)
- Badge details (name, description, image, criteria)
- Administrative details (badge issuing time, badge expiry date, badge issuer ID, badge earner ID)
The digital badge ecosystem

• The structure of digital badging systems is often described as an ecosystem, meaning that all parts of the system are interconnected. Because the badges need to be open to multiple users such as students, employers, and education institutions, this ecosystem is also often referred to as an open badging system, meaning that information is shared rather than being kept proprietary.

• digital badge ecosystem consists of the actors and their connections

• local and global badge ecosystem

• exportable and non-exportable badges
Key actors of the digital badge ecosystem

- **Developers**
- **Displayers**
- **Issuer**
- **Earner**
- **Viewers**
- **Endorsers**
Badge Issuers

- individuals, schools, employers, institutions, communities, groups
- determine the criteria for a badge
- define set of competencies or curriculum and assessments to determine if the earner has acquired the necessary set of skills for a badge
- badge represents an assessment outcome and provide access to information about that assessment
- create credentials to demonstrate mastery of skills and achievements who are of particular value to the issuer
Badge Earners

- any learner who meets the criteria defined by issuer to achieve a badge
- individuals who are learning and want to demonstrate a complete picture of their skills and accomplishments to various audience
- knowledge and skills learned outside the school
- skills that cannot necessarily be communicated by a standardized test or resume...
- they have a control
  - how to use the credential (decides when to display badge and to whom)
  - over their path for continued advancement and lifelong learning
Badge Viewers

- consumers

- formal and informal education providers, individuals, employers, communities, or other groups that have a need for or interest in, people with the skills and achievements symbolized by a badge

- interested in learner’s accomplishments

- should be able to check the identity of issuer, the earner and evidence behind the badge
Badge Endorsers

• organizations who examine and acknowledge the value inherent in badges, can clearly recognize and publicly acknowledge badge values by endorsing them and indicate their conceptual alignment with external organizations

• endorsement is added behind the badge

• quite new thing which can improve the process of recognition of learning
Badge Developers & Displayers

- developers: individuals or groups creating applications that are used for design and issuing of badges (Mozilla Open Badges, Open Badge Designer, Moodle...)

- displayers: the system for badge verification and display (Mozzila Badgepack, Facebook, LinkedIn...)
The value of using digital badges for the different stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Earners’ perspective</th>
<th>Issuers’ perspective</th>
<th>Viewers’ perspective</th>
<th>Endorsers’ perspective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• showing credentials</td>
<td>• increase the visibility and reputation of the badge issuer (in cases of open badges)</td>
<td>• possibility to check the evidence of what was recognized to earn the credential</td>
<td>• public acknowledgement of their values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• motivation to finish – getting the prize</td>
<td>• if their badge is valued by employers and other educational institutions – better attraction to issuers courses, programmes</td>
<td>• indication of educational institution readiness for a student</td>
<td>• visibility and recognition in increased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• getting requirements for the formal education entrance</td>
<td>• marketing component - higher value at the market</td>
<td>• better presentation and easier attraction to possible employers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• become aware of their learning path</td>
<td></td>
<td>• recognition of the learners’ status</td>
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Digital badges
Most important aspects of digital badges - summary

- increased motivation for learning
- individualized learners pathways - mapping
- micro-credentialing – smaller (modular) – flexible and less expensive to implement
1) Describe implementation of digital badges in non-formal online environment. You can find inspiration in your work environment. Describe stakeholders and identify benefits for each group of stakeholders.

2) Discuss the following questions:
   - Do you think that digital badges will change the open non-formal learning, and if yes, in which areas and what consequences will it have?
   - In your opinion, what are the main obstacles to broader acceptance of digital badges among learners, instructional designers, institutions providing open non-formal learning, employers...?