

***Dare to share* – Implementation plan**

Introduction

In October 2015, the Knowledge Sharing task force issued its recommendations to the University of Amsterdam regarding knowledge sharing in education. The report was subsequently distributed at the UvA and submitted for comment to the academic community, which responded extensively. In December, the task force responded to these comments with a reaction and a reflection. The advisory report was subsequently published as a UvA white paper.

Nine recommendations for the UvA and its faculties are outlined in the advisory report *Dare to Share*. The rector requested that the task force draft an Action Plan describing how these recommendations might be implemented.

Knowledge sharing in education

The advisory report explains that knowledge sharing plays an important role in helping professional lecturers to provide high quality education. The UvA Education Knowledge Sharing task force defines knowledge sharing as follows: sharing didactic information and experiences from daily education practice. This can take place at various levels, ranging from the teaching method or test to the curriculum. By sharing knowledge, teaching professionals learn from each other's experiences, acquire new ideas and not only perform better, but also enjoy their work more and deliver a superior product, as a result. Knowledge sharing also enhances the UvA's social capital and innovative culture.

Research conducted by the UvA Education Knowledge Sharing task force has revealed that the academic staff has a keen interest in and need for knowledge sharing. When it comes to the actual offering of knowledge sharing initiatives, both as compared to the actual demand from below and as regards the more abstract and strategic interest to enhance education quality and organisational development, the UvA is performing below par.

Approach

The UvA Education Knowledge Sharing task force is therefore proposing that the UvA take structural measures to promote the sharing of knowledge by a spectrum of teaching professionals, ranging from junior lecturers to Graduate School directors. Only in this fashion can the UvA as a whole effectively address emerging challenges in education, realise the objectives outlined in the new Strategic Plan and ensure the teaching professionals are central to these developments.

Based on a detailed analysis, numerous talks held with individual and groups of stakeholders, analyses of ongoing and unsuccessful initiatives (undertaken internally and externally, in this country and abroad), an online questionnaire, a literature study and an UvA-wide consultation round, the task force is formulating nine concrete recommendations. If the UvA is to promote knowledge sharing in a systematic, sustainable fashion, all nine recommendations must be implemented together.

Implementation

According to the task force, implementing these nine recommendations will require that

- the deans and department chairs assign knowledge sharing a permanent place in the HRM/professionalisation policy;
- ICTS and the university library (UB) realise the necessary support services (network, digital knowledge database);
- programme boards include knowledge sharing in the qualification requirements for professionalisation tracks;
- a UvA-wide Knowledge Sharing steering committee is set up;
- a budget is allocated at faculty and central level to engage (faculty) matchmakers and two central-level Knowledge Sharing project officers.

Elaboration and the concrete proposal

Sustaining support for knowledge sharing in UvA education will require the deans to ensure that

- each faculty hires a faculty matchmaker to provide practical support for the organisation of knowledge sharing activities, keep a faculty calendar of events (digitally, if desired), in which knowledge sharing activities are announced, exchange information on those activities with matchmakers from other faculties and identify which subjects are conducive to knowledge sharing;
- knowledge sharing is explicitly incorporated into professionalisation activities;
- the Graduate Schools regularly (e.g. once per month) hold knowledge sharing events, regardless of whether or not these include multiple degree programmes or faculties;
- the department chairs (e.g. in annual consultations) actively encourage academic staff to visit knowledge sharing events and also to actively share knowledge;

- if desired by a lecturer, the department chairs make knowledge sharing activities a condition for promotion;
- knowledge sharing is included as a task area in the faculty basic competency profile for the University Teaching Qualification (UTQ).

Sustaining support for knowledge sharing in UvA education also requires that

- a UvA Education Knowledge Sharing steering committee is established that consists of the current Education Knowledge Sharing task force and representatives from the professionalisation track programme boards, P&O and the University Committee on Education (UCO);
- in the near future, this steering committee compiles a job description for the two Knowledge Sharing project officers;
- two Knowledge Sharing project officers are then engaged at central level to support the steering committee, liaise between the faculty matchmakers and edit the digital knowledge sharing network and the related database;
- in consultation with the programme boards and/or P&O departments, the steering committee first submits a proposal for implementing the task area of 'Knowledge Sharing' for UTQ, advanced UTQ and LOL tracks, as well as for the university job classification system (UFO) profiles of academic staff and subsequently of the support and management staff (OBP);
- under the steering committee's supervision, ICTS makes a concrete proposal describing how the need for a digital network can be met, preferably with a direct connection to the new digital learning environment, and subsequently submits it to the Control Group to obtain financing;
- under the steering committee's supervision, the UB submits a concrete proposal for the organisation, configuration and opening of a digital knowledge database in collaboration with the faculty ICT & Education departments, ICTS representatives and the Communications Office.