

Proposal for the educational innovation platform

Shaping Expert Group Innovation of Education (SEG-IoE)

May 30, 2022

Background. The Shaping Expert Group Innovation of Education will end its activities as of July 2022. The SEG-IoE was active in different domains of education. An important example is the advice on the definition of Challenge-Based Learning, involving programme directors, teaching faculty, students, and (vice-) deans. The SEG-IoE also provided input in the development of a Life-Long Learning proposition at UT. With the termination of the SEG-IoE activities, this advisory/ sounding board function will disappear. In its place, the SEG-IoE strongly advises the Executive Board to establish an educational innovation platform.¹ *Main reason: the SEG IoE is of the opinion that the UT needs a group of people that can advise the policy makers and the UCOW about the innovation of education, as the educational landscape is changing rapidly.*

Proposal. The educational innovation platform is a UT-wide platform to support policymaking on education at University of Twente. The purpose of the platform is to feed and advise the UT about visions on, and insights into (the future of) of academic education at University of Twente. Its specific place in the organization of University of Twente is to be determined. Update June 9: Advice of the EB is to connect the platform to the UCOW.

The scope of the platform includes the further development and actualization of current education, as an element of educational innovation. The function of the platform is twofold:

1. *A sounding board function*, to support policy development, decision-making, and evaluations of UT-wide developments and innovations in academic education at University of Twente.
2. *An advisory function* for the University of Twente about UT-wide and (inter)national developments and innovations in education.

Examples. Some of developments and innovations are short term, for example how to deal with hybrid education. Other visions and insights extend to developments in the medium and long run. An example of a development in education in the medium term is safeguarding "life-long-learning" education within the University of Twente. An example in the long run is the possible development of "micro credits" in higher education.

Fostering a plurality of insights. Within and between the faculties and programs of University of Twente different visions and insights exist about how academic education can further develop and innovate. When advising policymaking on educational innovation, the safeguarding of pluriform visions and insights is an important value. After all, to provide insight into (more or less ambitious) visions and insights from the UT, the platform must provide a safe space for discussions and input from different perspectives. Insights from different perspectives must be made explicit to prevent "blind spots". In addition, it is important that the platform considers the feasibility of proposals and ideas in the short, medium, and long term. Finding a good balance between diversity, ambition and feasibility will largely determine the success of advice.

¹ Before the corona pandemic struck, an educational innovation platform was active to support policymaking in the UCOW.

Informal status. The educational innovation platform does not have a formal status within the decision-making process at the University of Twente. The educational innovation platform derives its authority:

1. From the expertise, professionalism, and commitment of its members. The members are professionals within the UT who: (a) feel strongly involved in academic education; (b) have their own vision of academic education within the UT; (c) have experience in realizing their vision in their daily practice. Members of the platform act based on their individual professional judgment. It includes student members.
2. From embedding members in various faculties (striving for a balanced distribution across age categories/ gender/cultural background).
3. From its transparency in composition, working procedures, and reporting.

What the platform is not:

- *No (formal) consultation or decision-making body.* The platform does not develop policies. These functions are captured by the Strategy and Policy Department (S&P), and CELT. To function well, representatives from S&P and CELT must be members of the platform as well. Decision-making is the responsibility of the Executive Board, advised by the “strategisch beraad” (SB), and UCOW.
- *No employee participation body.* The educational innovation platform is not a participative body and does not constitute an alternative for U-Council, F-Council or program committees. It does not aim to represent employees or students in a broad sense. The platform therefore does not seek advice based on student / staff participation; membership of the platform is in personal capacity based on expertise.

What people in the body?

The members of the SEG IoE are a dean, a vice dean of education, a programme director, a colleague from Strategy and Policy, a colleague from CELT, a colleague from Marketing and communication, and 2 student members. All those members act as representatives of the UT, not a specific faculty or student group. They bring forth their knowledge and expertise, making this constellation special and rich as we can talk across the different levels in the university and together decide where to address a certain issue. For the platform, it might be wise to add a representative with expertise in research on innovation of education (e.g., CHEPS). Update June 9: Advice EB: To safeguard a safe environment, you don't have to include a vice dean or a dean.

Working procedures (proposal).

- The platform is supported by administratively and has a coordinator (by CELT?).
- The platform meets once every six weeks.
- The platform is chaired by one of the platform members.
- The platform has a website for transparent communication about the platform.
- Advices are brief (max. 2 pages A4), but may have underlying documents.

What if there's no such a body?

Who is the owner of educational innovation? Where do we discuss the decisions we want to make with respect to our developments in education? Where can we find a broad involvement? Where can we discuss the innovations with people that have practical experience? Who does advice SP, UCOW and CvB on educational innovation?