



Recommendations: Good
Practice Approaches to LLL
UNIVERSITY OF ALICANTE

LOGIC:

Implementing the lifelong learning Concept in SNA- Responding to the changing needs of dynamic economies

Deliverable D1.4

Title:

Permanent University of the University of Alicante (UPUA)

General information

The Permanent University of the University of Alicante (UPUA) is a scientific, cultural and social development programme of the UA which has as its aim to promote Science and Culture, as well as intergenerational relationships, in order to improve the quality of life of seniors (older adults) and encourage their participation, within their life context, as social 'dynamisers', in accordance with Articles 2.d), 108.c), 120 y 164 of the University of Alicante Statute, Art. 35 of the Generalitat Valenciana (Regional Government) Statute, Act 1/95 of the Generalitat Valenciana on training of older adults, the Preamble, 2nd and 9th paragraphs of the Organic Law 4/2007 of April 12th on Universities that modifies Law 6/2001 of December 21st on Universities, and the Agreement signed by the Generalitat Valenciana - Conselleria - Regional Ministry - of Education, Culture and Sport and the University of Alicante for the implementation of training actions addressed to the segment of Older Adults above 50 years of age.

The University of Alicante wants to facilitate older adults' personal and social development, regardless of their place of residence, income level or education, offering them help in return for the invaluable contribution they have made to society with all their work and efforts throughout their lives.

This is the new challenge the University of Alicante's Permanent University is taking up with the collaboration of the Education and Culture and Sport Departments of the Valencia Community Autonomous Government, various municipalities, as well as several private bank institutions: offering the UPUA older adult university education programme, which seeks to meet the interests and needs of this sector of the native and resident population living in the Valencia Community.

The UPUA programme is integrated into the framework of specific university education for older adults and responds to such demands as the need for a deeper democratisation of knowledge, a reduction of social inequalities, a greater social involvement of older adults in society, and the enhancement of intra- and intergenerational relationships, all of which will contribute to maintain their quality of life and besides, will enlarge the range of options available for them to continue active life outside their normal working environment.

More detailed description of the action:

The Permanent University finds its target population among people who are 50 years old or older, are residents in the Valencia Community, and wish to improve their sociocultural status. No previous qualifications are required. People already registered for any of the three cycles or levels of university studies imparted at the University of Alicante can under no circumstances enrol in this programme.

The majority of our students are women (63% as opposed to 37% men) with ages ranging between 50 and 93 years. In the 2008-09 academic year, students enrolled in 134 subjects, corresponding to the following areas: Humanities (47%), Computer Science, Image and Sound (27%), Experimental Sciences (8%), Health and Social Action (11%) and, finally Society and Law (7%). From the beginning of the Permanent University project on, approximately 350 students have obtained already the Diploma Senior, by which the studies are recognized for strictly academic purposes. This diploma is given to those students, who have passed 72 credit points, that is 3 academic years minimum, with 6 subjects of our UPUA programme. The oldest of these graduates is 93 years old.

It has to be pointed out that this is a Lifelong Learning Programme, which is focused mainly on personal development and on promoting an active citizenship that is able to maintain a high level of autonomy within the knowledge society of the 21st century. Among the maxims, which serve as an inspiration for the programme, the one defining best our students' aspirations is "learning for the pleasure of learning" and sharing experiences and knowledge, in a University, which we would like to be open to all the ages and the citizenship as a whole.

The objectives are to:

- To help older adults in their continuous adaptation process to our fast-changing society.
- To provide older adults who could not receive it in the past with a chance of having access to higher education.
- To offer educational alternatives to professionals who wish to widen their knowledge or get into other fields of knowledge.
- To recognise, enrich and enhance the experience acquired by older adults during their professional life.
- To encourage older adults who have accumulated working experience to reflect on their skills within a theoretic-practical framework so that they can assume a more active and efficient role in the development of the society they live in.
- To help older adults to reorient their life with the aim of becoming more useful for their family, their social community and their country.
- To attract professionally non-active people so that they can help to increase collective participation and social solidarity, thus creating a new framework for intergenerational relationships.
- To provide opportunities to share knowledge and experiences through the interaction of different working groups, to incorporate new life experiences that can reinforce each participant's ability to be useful to **society, and finally to** guarantee the feedback of the educational system through already educated

- individuals with expertise in their respective fields.
- To establish special action lines for women in collaboration with the Centre for Women's Studies.
 - To take advantage of the continuous education programmes offered by the University of Alicante, especially those offering courses on Spanish language, culture and history for foreign residents living in our province.

Success factors and recommendations from this case study for LOGIC:

The main success factor of CONTINUA lies in its four basic pillars of the programme:

- The academic programme and the “sensu estricto” education, directed towards the carrying out of the Diploma Senior within the model frame of University Programmes for Elderly Persons in Spain. This is a completely optional programme, free in its programme outline to which you gain access without requirements, nor previous qualifications, having as its only condition being over 50 years old.
- The Programme of Extracurricular Activities, shared with the Secretariats of Culture, Extracurricular Activities and Sports, the Alicante Town University Venue and the Museum of the University of Alicante (MUA), and aimed at the popularisation of Science and Culture, for that we receive periodically a support by public (city councils and University Venues of the province) and private institutions (BANCAJA Foundation, La Cam charitable work, La Caixa Foundation, OAMI, Official Pharmaceutics' College Alicante, MAPFRE foundation).
- The national and international research and cooperation for carrying out projects concerning permanent education and lifelong learning within the European Higher Education Area. In this sense, the UPUA develops and shares cooperation lines by means of projects, courses, workshops, conferences, meetings and congresses related to the improvement of educational University programmes for elderly persons, in aspects of educational management, quality and academic regulation, both in Spain and in other countries of our surrounding.
- The active participation of the elderly students, which allowed starting some important initiatives and projects about research and collaborative and voluntarily organized learning, as well as national and international exchange and mobility programmes. This promotes to a great extent the development of cultural and personal autonomy and the capacity of social interaction; all these aspects provide the programme with a higher quality.

Another key success factor is the innovative teaching/learning model provision:

- Active: the teaching/learning is done by practice and application of the acquired knowledge.
- Participatory: the emphasis is put on the participation of the elderly students within the programme and the carrying out of curricular suggestions
- Socializing: it is based on group work and social interaction between students and teachers
- Open and Flexible: it adapts to the educational necessities, to the available spaces and to the age of the target group
- Intergenerational: it tries to find a connection between different age and population groups through common actions

Finally in term of cost efficiency, the UPUA uses the human resources and premises of the UA.