



## Adaptation of Teaching and Learning in the 2020-21 Academic Year to Covid-19 Health Measures

25/06/2020

University news & events

**Full title: Plan for the Adaptation of  
Teaching and Learning in the Academic Year  
2020-21 to the Health Measures deriving  
from the Covid-19 Pandemic**

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### 1.INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Regulatory framework

Royal Decree 463/2020 of 14 March declared a state of alert in order to facilitate the management of the health emergency triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic. This Decree agreed to suspend all on-site academic activities throughout the entire education system. Since then, the Andalusian University System has adopted, in a coordinated fashion, various agreements on adapting universities to these exceptional circumstances. Thus, on 11 April 2020, the rectors of these Andalusian universities, together with the Regional Minister of Economy, Knowledge, Enterprise and Universities (CECEU) of Andalusia and the Director of Evaluation and Accreditation of the Andalusian Knowledge Agency (DEVA-AAC), signed a framework document to adapt teaching, learning and assessment at Andalusian universities, during the second semester of the 2019-20 academic year, to these exceptional circumstances. Within this framework, the University of Granada (UGR) developed and implemented a Contingency Plan for Off-Campus Teaching, Learning and Assessment.

In planning for the 2020-21 academic year, it is essential to take into account that the evolution of the pandemic may require measures to limit classroom capacity and to ensure physical distancing. Furthermore, on-site activities may even have to be suspended once again in the entire system, at certain faculties or schools, or among



certain teaching groups. In fact, Article 9 of Royal Decree-Law 21/2020, of 9 June, on urgent prevention, containment and coordination measures to tackle the health crisis caused by Covid-19, establishes that in all educational centres (including universities): "it must be ensured that the necessary organisational measures are taken to prevent crowding and ensure that a safe distance of at least 1.5 metres is maintained. Where it is not possible to maintain this distance, appropriate hygiene measures shall be observed to prevent the risk of contagion".

In order to facilitate preparations for the 2020-21 academic year, the Spanish Ministry of Universities issued, on 10 June 2020, a series of Recommendations for adjusting the coming academic year to an adapted on-campus mode. The Secretariat General for Universities of the Ministry specified these recommendations on 16 June 2020 to facilitate decision-making regarding the variability between the different types of facilities that exist within the same university.

Likewise, on 16 June 2020, the Agreement on common criteria for the adaptation of university education to the health measures arising from the Covid-19 pandemic for the 2020-21 academic year, was also made public. This document was developed by the working group in charge of planning for the coming academic year, comprising the Andalusian Directorate General for Universities, representatives of the governing teams of Andalusian universities, and the Directorate of Evaluation and Accreditation (DEVA-AAC).

## **1.2 Different scenarios for the adaptation of university education**

It is therefore essential that, in preparation for the 2020-21 academic year, the University of Granada develops a Plan for the Adaptation of Teaching and Learning to the different scenarios that may arise at the beginning, and throughout, the coming academic year, establishing the general criteria that will guide this process of adaptation until the pandemic ends and until academic activities have completely returned to normal.

Specifically, two scenarios are possible. The first entails fewer on-campus (face-to-face) academic activities as a result of the health measures requiring physical distancing and thereby limiting classroom capacity (**scenario A**), while the second scenario would entail the complete suspension of on-campus activities (**scenario B**).

At the University of Granada, as is the case at all other Andalusian universities, the 2020-21 academic year will begin in accordance with scenario A (provided that the evolution of the pandemic does not change significantly between now and then). This scenario seeks to offer the greatest possible amount of on-campus activities in order

to ensure comprehensive training for students.

This Plan will be adapted to the regulations adopted by the relevant state or autonomous community authorities.

This Plan establishes the academic framework and general criteria for the organisation of teaching and learning activities at faculties, schools, and departments for the coming academic year. Any aspects which, through the implementation of this plan, may affect working conditions, will be subject to negotiation with the relevant union representatives.

## 2. PRINCIPLES

The UGR is an on-campus university that promotes healthy campus living, with everything necessary for students to have an authentic university experience. They can learn from their lecturers, while sharing these experiences with other students from all over Spain and the world, as well as with the entire university community (our administrative and support staff also play a fundamental role in this community).

Therefore, the planning of the coming academic year will be based on this approach. It will entail on-campus teaching and, if necessary, on-campus teaching in smaller groups, combined with remote training activities in synchronous (real time) and asynchronous (recorded) modes via digital platforms.

This on-campus mode, which places emphasis on the importance of on-site classroom activities, must be delivered safely and responsibly, entailing the adoption of all the relevant safety measures in university spaces. Moreover, it will be complemented by technological resources.

**The principles upon which this Plan for the Adaptation of Teaching and Learning is based are:**

- **The maximum possible levels of on-campus attendance for teaching, learning and assessment activities:** The highest possible percentage of on-campus attendance permitted in line with the health restrictions will be maintained, with special attention being given to new students joining the University of Granada.
- **Maximum safety:** Activities carried out in person will be adapted at all times to the health protocols in force, following the instructions of the health authorities regarding the management of the pandemic in our environment.
- **Guaranteeing the quality** of our education and public services is of the utmost importance.
- **Social commitment and guaranteeing equal opportunities:** We will remain committed to the most vulnerable groups in the university community, especially those who have been directly affected by the pandemic. The key

objective is that, in any eventuality, no one is left behind, due to a lack of means or resources, when it comes to completing the academic year. Likewise, special attention will be paid to maintaining a work-life balance, as well as to the health situations of UGR staff.

- This Plan for the Adaptation of Teaching and Learning in the 2020-21 academic year has been developed in the belief that the University of Granada is a heterogeneous institution and that, therefore, adaptations made to the organisation of the coming academic year must be flexible, taking into account the unique nature of the faculties and schools that make up our University. In this regard, each faculty and school will develop its own contingency plan, which will be established in accordance with this Plan and the corresponding health measures. The Vice-Rectorate for Teaching and Learning and the Health and Risk Prevention (SPRL) Service will verify that these contingency plans have been established accordingly.

### **3. ADAPTATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

1. The course guides will indicate the programming for the academic year 2020-21, in line with the established mode of the degree programme, and will include information on the adaptation of the course contents, teaching methodologies, and assessment activities to the two aforementioned scenarios (except for courses that are delivered fully online according to the corresponding validation report). The course guide templates for undergraduate and master's degrees for the 2020-21 academic year are available via the following links:

- <https://docencia.ugr.es/estudios/grado#title1>
- <http://sl.ugr.es/0b6H>

2. The course guides will be approved by the relevant bodies in line with the UGR Assessment Policy and Regulations and in line with the UGR Academic Organization Plan (POD) for 2020-21.

3. In scenario A, a multimodal or hybrid teaching and learning system will be adopted, combining as much on-campus activities as are possible with online classes (synchronous or real time sessions) and remote training activities, so that students can learn autonomously. If it is possible to maintain a safe distance of 1.5 metres between those in attendance in a classroom, the sessions will be delivered exclusively through an on-campus mode. Moreover, the Plan for the Adaptation of Teaching and Learning must make provisions for the transition to exclusively online teaching in the event that scenario B were to be enacted, leading to the suspension of on-campus activities.

4. All groups from courses on undergraduate or master's degree programmes will have access to a space in the University's teaching and learning support platform.

5. In the multimodal teaching and learning system of scenario A, academic planning will preferably be based on the following criteria:

- The highest possible percentage of on-campus activities permitted in line with the health restrictions will be maintained, thereby maintaining the greatest possible level of adherence to the approved curriculum, while also acknowledging the importance of on-campus attendance in university education.
- These on-campus activities will be organised in fixed groups, in accordance with the approved group structure, and the size of these groups will be determined by the restrictions established by the health authorities and the capacity of the spaces in which they will be carried out. Under no circumstances should the implementation of these measures entail the hiring of additional staff.
- With regard to practical or experimental classes, priority will be given to on-campus modes.
- The thematic contents of courses will be adapted to this mode of teaching and learning, and schedules will be organised with a view to facilitating compatibility between on-campus and online teaching and learning.

6. Both synchronous (real time) sessions and asynchronous (recorded) training activities may be scheduled. It is important that the latter are suited to online teaching and learning, and that the supervision of and interaction with students is sufficient to ensure that they can follow the course properly. Recorded activities replacing on-campus or real-time sessions must lead to training benefits for students.

7. The timetables of courses approved by faculties and schools will be adapted, if necessary, to scenarios A and B, and will be maintained for all of the teaching and learning modes (excluding specific modifications to weekly timetables owing to restrictions in teaching and learning spaces).

8. Individual and group tutorials and support will be delivered in an on-campus or online mode during the established timetable, in both scenarios A and B.

9. Departments will ensure that the Plan for the Substitution of Teaching Staff is updated, which enables them to cover all of the teaching assignments in the knowledge areas encompassed within their department. This Plan will be applied in either of the two scenarios to deal with contingencies.

## **4. ADAPTATION OF ASSESSMENT**

1. During the 2020-21 academic year, as indicated in the UGR Assessment Policy and Regulations (Article 6, point 2), evaluation will preferably be based on continuous assessment, thus facilitating the transition from one scenario to another.

2. The assessment and weighting instruments and criteria established in the

validation report of each degree programme will be adapted to scenarios A and B.

3. In scenario A, final assessments of courses planned in the course guides will preferably be delivered in an on-campus mode, taking into account the capacity limits approved by the health authorities.

4. Remote assessment exercises will include mechanisms to guarantee the authorship of the exercises undertaken by students. In all instances, adequate legal and security guarantees will be ensured with regard to the fundamental right to privacy, taking into account the principle of proportionality.

## **5. WORK PLACEMENTS**

### **5.1 Curricular work placements**

1. Curricular work placements will be continued under the same conditions established in the validation report of each degree programme and within the framework of the existing agreements with the collaborating entities and organisations. Provided the circumstances allow, and the collaborating organisations meet the required health measures, the curricular work placements will be carried out through an on-site (face-to-face) mode.

2. In scenario A, if the number of on-site hours at the collaborating organisation has to be limited due to capacity restrictions, on-site activities (with a reasonable volume of learning outcomes to guarantee the sufficient acquisition of skills) shall be combined with other types of remote activities that can be assessed (projects, reports, training programmes, etc.).

3. If on-site attendance at the collaborating organisation is not possible, the training objectives will be achieved through online activities carried out with the collaborating organisation, provided that the organisation facilitates this mode of work.

4. In the event that curricular work placements have to be interrupted due to a temporary lockdown, the acquisition of skills may be achieved through the development of alternative training activities, provided that the appropriate conditions are met. In these cases, the internal tutors will intensify their monitoring of the placements. When it is not possible to adapt the placements to a remote mode, authorisation may be granted to complete them intensively during the periods permitted by the health situation.

5. For long-term work placements on university degrees that provide access to regulated professions, the recommendations and agreements established by the national conferences of deans will be taken into account, so as to ensure that the skills acquired by students are similar throughout the national territory.

## **5.2 Extracurricular work placements**

1. Provided the circumstances allow and the collaborating organisations meet the required health measures, extracurricular work placements will be carried out through an on-site (face-to-face) mode at the collaborating organisations.
2. If on-site attendance at the collaborating organisation is not possible, the training objectives will be achieved through online activities carried out with the collaborating organisation, provided the organisation facilitates this mode of work.

## **6. INTERNATIONALIZATION AND MOBILITY PROGRAMMES**

1. The outgoing mobility of students, teaching and research staff (PDI) and administrative and support staff (PAS) on the different programmes in which the UGR participates may go ahead in the 2020-21 academic year, provided this is permitted by the health situation and regulations in force in Spain and in the host country. In this regard, the scope of application of article 27 of the International Student Mobility Regulation, covering the safety of students on mobility programmes, has been extended. The Regulation establishes the obligation, which is also applicable to PDI and PAS, to follow the travel advice provided by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation (MAEUEC).
2. Outgoing students and staff must submit a declaration of responsibility (declaración responsable) in writing, stating that they will look after their own safety, fully adhere to all of the containment measures adopted nationally and internationally and, immediately upon their arrival, register at the corresponding Spanish consular office/embassy in the host country or, in the case of short-term mobilities, register using the register of travellers of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation (MAEUEC). Furthermore, all individuals must be familiar with the regulations in force related to the current health crisis in the host country. Likewise, students will expressly accept possible modifications to the teaching and learning modes at the host university that may occur due to the pandemic.
3. The incoming mobility of students, teaching and research staff (PDI) and administrative and support staff (PAS) on the different programmes in which the

University of Granada participates may go ahead in the 2020-21 academic year, provided this is permitted by the health situation and regulations in force in Spain and in the host country.

4. Incoming students and staff must submit a declaration of responsibility (declaración responsable) in writing, stating that they will look after their own safety, fully adhere to all of the containment measures adopted at the University of Granada and, immediately upon their arrival, register at the corresponding consular office/embassy of their country of origin or nationality. Likewise, students will expressly accept possible modifications to the teaching, learning and assessment modes at the University of Granada that may occur due to the pandemic, should there be a transition to scenario B.

5. In the case of Erasmus+ mobility, the rules established by the specific programme in question shall apply, along with any additional regulations which may be established by the European Commission or the Spanish Service for the Internationalization of Education (SEPIE) on the grounds of force majeure. Similarly, in the case of other external programmes, the rules laid down by the funding body shall apply.

6. The SICUE programme will be maintained under the current terms, with a contingency plan in place that would be activated in the event of a change to a remote or off-campus mode.

## **7. ASSESSMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE AND MASTER'S DISSERTATIONS**

1. The defence of undergraduate and master's dissertations will be conducted via on-campus (face-to-face) modes when this is compatible with the health measures deriving from the Covid-19 pandemic.

2. In scenario B, dissertation tutors must pay special attention to monitoring the student's work correctly, scheduling tutorials and support sessions through communication channels that are available to the student.

3. Experimental undergraduate and master's dissertations, as well as those that require fieldwork placements, will be adapted to the measures established by the relevant health authorities, at all times.

4. If the student's work placement is delayed because it is impossible to adapt it to a remote teaching and learning mode during the scheduled dates, the student will be allowed to submit their dissertation even without having completed the placement.

## 8. RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

On-site research activities at university departments, centres and institutes will be carried out in accordance with the contingency plans and general action plans in force at the University of Granada, as well as the specific plans drawn up by the different research centres for each scenario. These plans will specify the application of hygiene measures, restrictions on the capacity of facilities, physical distancing between people, and the use of personal protective equipment. These measures are recommended at all times for research staff, technical staff, administrative and support staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students, and users of the facilities and technical services of these research centres.

In the event of a transition to scenario B, making it necessary once again to suspend on-site activities in the entire system or at certain centres, the corresponding regulations will be applied.

## 9. DOCTORAL THESIS DEFENCES

1. In the event of a transition to scenario B, requiring the suspension of on-campus activities, the University of Granada will apply the Resolution of 26 March 2020 by the Vice-Rector for Teaching and Learning establishing the necessary organisational measures and instructions for the procedures to submit and defend doctoral theses or the corresponding regulations in force at the time.
2. In the case of remote defences of doctoral theses, the period established for public presentations according to the regulations on doctoral programmes at the UGR will be guaranteed, so that any candidate may consult this information and, if necessary, make any written appeals they deem appropriate.
3. These measures will be applied to the defence of doctoral thesis proposals.

## 10. ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The adaptation of teaching and learning to either of the two modes covered in this Plan for the Adaptation of Teaching and Learning will be conducted in line with the dates scheduled in the 2020-21 academic calendar, which was approved by the Governing Council of the University of Granada in an ordinary session held on 22 May 2020. This excludes courses which, due to their practical or experimental nature, require a level of on-campus attendance that is not compatible with the scenarios in which the teaching is delivered. This latter scenario is subject to authorisation by the Vice-Rectorate for Teaching and Learning.

## **11. QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM FOR DEGREE PROGRAMMES**

1. The changes adopted due to these exceptional circumstances will help to maintain the quality of the training provided. Additionally, the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG-15) will be consistently employed as a benchmark, guaranteeing the acquisition of the skills and learning outcomes that have been planned in the training programmes.
2. The procedures that make up the internal quality assurance systems of the degrees, faculties and schools of the University of Granada will make it possible to keep track of the changes introduced, collect information on the satisfaction of the different stakeholders in relation to these changes, and analyse this information with a view to developing proposals for improvements. The Quality Assurance Committees of the degree programmes, in coordination with the Quality, Teaching Innovation and Planning Unit (UCIDP), will strive to ensure that these procedures are followed and that they are adapted to the scenarios that may arise.

## **12. MEASURES AND PLANS TO SUPPORT THIS PLAN FOR THE ADAPTATION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

### **Grants and scholarships (including their aims and objectives):**

1. Provision of a UGR-specific fund for study grants and scholarships, with the aim of mitigating the negative effects that Covid-19 may have had on families and students. It will also enable all students to begin and continue their studies at our University, guaranteeing equal opportunities.
2. A social grant fund for the most vulnerable groups, equipped with a greater budget, to respond to the financial and personal situations of students at the time of applying.
3. Grants for materials to help alleviate the digital divide.

### **Training plan:**

1. Teaching staff: Training in digital skills and other skills to help them adapt to scenarios A and B, through a specific line of training in online and blended teaching in relation to didactic and technological aspects. It will also include technical support teams at faculties and schools to adapt training to the different branches of knowledge. The UGR Plan for Teacher Training and Innovative Teaching Practice (FIDO) will be strengthened through specific training lines for teaching staff, which

will improve their knowledge of remote teaching methodologies, technological tools for online teaching and assessment, and the design of training activities in digital environments.

2. Students: Training in the use of digital tools, especially to enable them to follow teaching activities properly. This will include complementary training in cross-cutting skills, which may be subject to the recognition of credits.

3. Administrative and support staff (PAS): Training in digital skills to help them adapt to scenarios A and B.

### **Technological support plan (subject to funding)**

1. Update and improve the university's communications network.

2. Strengthen local infrastructure systems and extend cloud infrastructures.

3. Increase the number of classrooms equipped to broadcast and/or record classes.

4. Additional software tools for the production of multimedia content and the inclusive adaptation of content.

5. Improve the support platform for online teaching, learning and assessment.

6. Increase the resources aimed at virtualisation, in order to provide remote access to software in computer rooms.

7. Help to reduce the digital divide.

8. Provide and improve technological equipment at faculties, schools, and departments.

### **Grants to Support Practical Teaching**

1. To prioritise changes in the aims of the 27th programme of Grants to Support Practical Teaching (2019-20 academic year). These grants are aimed at implementing measures to help adapt teaching, learning and practical activities deriving from the implementation of the Plan for Adapting Teaching and Learning.

2. Reorient projects that can be funded within the 28th programme of Grants to Support Practical Teaching (2020-21 academic year), with a view to implementing actions that contribute to the improvement of practical teaching and its adaptation to scenarios A and B.

## **Grants to Support Practical Teaching on Master's Degrees**

### **Plan to support international mobility**

1. Guide for students and staff participating in international mobility programmes.
2. Plan to monitor outgoing students and staff.
3. Guidance, monitoring and support plan for incoming students and staff.
4. Emergency protocol (urgent support at destinations in the event of a emergency owing to force majeure).

### **Occupational Health Plan**

**Plan for Psychological and Educational Support:** To improve the Educational Psychology Office's resources, while also supporting its staff, in order to be able to tend to all students effectively and provide quick responses to their problems and concerns.

### **User Services Guide**

1. Strengthen and remodel information and user support services that form part of the University's central services and faculties and schools, prioritising support provided online and over the phone.

## **ANNEXE 1: HEALTH MEASURES**

- Preventive Measures of the Plan for the On-Site Return of Members of the UGR Community during the Covid-19 situation.
- Guide to Good Practices during the Covid-19 situation.