

An implicated choice of programmes

University of Girona

Sectorial Campus Programme

Programme description

One of the priority challenges at the University of Girona is the alignment of teaching and research with the demands and needs of the social and economic sectors, and also with the RIS3CAT smart specialisation strategy. The idea behind the UdG Sectorial Campus Programme is to build relations with companies and institutions in the target sectors to effectively facilitate the transfer of technology and knowledge. One of the goals of the UdG Sectorial Campus is to increase the social and economic impact of academic activity in relation to its focal areas, guiding research towards the needs of companies, and teaching towards the training of the kind of professionals that the sector requires.

In this context, the UdG, which offers a broad and diverse range of educational options, is reorienting part of this offer towards the focal areas of each Campus. These Campuses need to be associated to an integrated training offer, from pre-university training activities to continuing and professional training activities, through benchmark undergraduate, master's and PhD courses.

Leaving aside the many and varied forms of continuing education, within the framework of the Sectorial Campus, the reorientation of master's degrees is especially relevant. The benchmark master's programmes in the focal areas of the Sectorial Campus have been created with the clear intention of unambiguously linking studies to the demands and needs of the target socioeconomic sectors: graduate profiles are defined in shared discussion with significant agents from these sectors; goals and competences are agreed, which must be consistent with these profiles; and curricular structure and contents are then defined to meet the training objectives. Agents from the sectors are not only implicated in the master's degree from the very definition of the curriculum, which is actively contrasted within the framework of the Sectorial Advisory Council of each Campus, but also in the way they are taught, participating as associate or visiting lecturers, hosting students on internships and co-directing their Master's Final Projects, thus helping them to find employment through active agencies. Courses that are associated to the Sectorial Campus also foster innovative teaching methodologies that are adapted to the needs in each case, with particular emphasis on problem-based learning and aspects inherent to dual training. When students choose to take a degree or master's degree related to a Campus at the UdG, they know that, in addition to quality training and a wonderful environment, they are also going to find a good number of companies and institutions there that are very directly committed to their learning and training.

Key concepts behind the choice of training programmes connected to the Sectorial Campus include a global and integrating view to offering structure and coherence at each of the different training levels; transversality, seeking complementarity between different fields of knowledge; quality and excellence in accordance with international standards; the internationalisation of courses; and a special emphasis on orientation towards the training needs of the labour market: professionalization and employability. As a whole, putting students and their educational interests at the heart of course planning.

Solidarity activities: a good practice of university social commitment

University of Girona

Social Commitment Unit

<https://www.udg.edu/ca/compromis-social>

Programme description

In May 2009, the UdG Board of Governors approved the credits that must be recognised for conducting charity and cooperation activities. Following this approval, and given the need to change previous cooperation programmes into activities that promote the acquisition of skills, the Social Commitment Unit (UCS) proposed the following goals:

- » Turn the basic training of university co-operators and volunteers into training that is able to influence the development of transversal skills.
- » Apply a new type of training focused on service learning.
- » Boost the relationship with the territory through implication in projects run by NGOs, charity organisations and public administrations in areas such as education, health, disability, culture, sustainability, social affairs, etc.
- » Promote the inclusion of students in international cooperation for development projects.
- » Design instruments to assess the transversal skills developed.

The Solidary Activities organised by the UCS for all students at the UdG were designed and implemented using the pedagogical methodology of service learning, whereby students are able to develop the transversal skills selected by the University in the field of solidarity, and hence learn in a **skills-based manner and with social responsibility**, through training and practical activities with different organisations, charities and public institutions associated to the UdG's surrounding environment.

The Solidarity Activities were designed in association to an agreement established with the charities, public institutions and social agents in the Girona region. To date, more than **113 partnership agreements** have been processed and signed, and this number is continually rising and identifies us within the entities, foundations and other administrations in our region as the contact point at the UdG for conducting Solidarity Activities.

Impact

Since the beginning in **2010/11**, and through to the present, **1,271 Solidarity Activities** have been made available to the students on the page that we designed on the UCS Volunteering website. Here, students can find all the information they need about each of the activities that they can choose, as well as details of the registration procedure, the commitments and activities involved, information about the reports and evaluations that will be conducted once the activity is completed, both individually and in collaboration with the participating entities and institutions, as well as the process for getting academic credits recognised.

The Solidary Activities offered to UdG students are classified into seven areas that group different types of activities: **communication, culture, disability, education, health, social and sustainability**. This is not a closed classification, as it can be adapted to any arising needs. The target groups are, among others, those at **risk of social exclusion and the most disadvantaged groups in our region**:

- » **Children:** support for school success workshops, support for leisure and sports activities, support with reading, etc.
- » **Youth:** educational and sporting support, school success workshops, assisted study workshops, support for rapid HIV testing, counselling on drugs and safe sex, etc.
- » **Disabilities:** support for disability organisations, support for occupational therapies, etc.
- » **Senior citizens:** sponsorship, intergenerational activities, activities in day centres, etc.
- » **Homeless people:** support in reception centres, activities for the improvement of interpersonal relationships, UdG EcoSolidari orchard.
- » **Immigrants:** mediation in neighbourhood communities, open spaces, etc.
- » **Penitentiary interns:** support with occupational and reading workshops at Figueres Prison, etc.
- » **Hospitals:** young health promoters, support for oncological diseases, etc.

These Solidarity Activities are not only a source of learning for students but also help them to integrate better in the society around them and fully assume their roles as **active and socially responsible agents**.

From 2010/11 to the present, **8,823 students** on any UdG degree have participated.