

LABOUR MARKET INSERTION OF THE GALICIAN UNIVERSITY SYSTEM GRADUATES COMPETENCIES REQUIRED IN THE CURRENT EMPLOYMENT

ACSUG: MISSION AND VISION

The fundamental mission of ACSUG is to contribute to improving the quality of the Galician University System (SUG). To do so, it takes actions in the area of drafting reports, evaluation, certification and accreditation for the activities conducted by Galician universities, especially related to teaching, research, knowledge transfer and management.

The ACSUG provides constant support to gathering and channelling information among the Galician universities, other institutions and social agents, contributing to help the SUG remain up-to-date and in line with ever-changing social needs at all times.

The ACSUG aims to be a point of reference in guaranteeing the quality of the SUG Higher Education institutions, recognised in Galicia, Spain and internationally for its independence, transparency and credibility.

ACSUG is a full member of European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

ACSUG is included on the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

ABSTRACT

From its creation, one of the leading activities in the ACSUG is the performance of labour market insertion surveys for SUG graduates. SUG is formed by three public universities, with seven campus in Galicia (NW-Spain). The labour market insertion project first started with the study of graduates from the 1996-1997 to 2000-2001 academic years which meant the survey covered a five-year period. Later surveys covered bi-annual timescales (2001-2003 and 2003-2005) and the latest reviews were subsequently conducted on an annual basis (2005-2006 and 2006-2007).

The general objectives of these studies are to know the employment situation of the SUG graduates, approximately a year and a half after completing their degree. This knowledge comprises different factors as employment situation, salary, type of contract and competencies required in their job, as well as the possible difficulties encountered in their labour market insertion period. In addition, a retrospective view of the university, from the point of view of the graduates, allows for the detection of training and organizational needs of the institution itself.

The information derived from these studies is crucial for universities in the design of new academic degrees within the framework of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), as well as for the management of resources and services for the students. Currently, the SUG universities are in the process of adaptation to the EHEA. In this adaptation process, there is a commitment for employability of graduates. This fact emphasizes the need to perform studies on labour market insertion of university graduates, with special attention to the possible gap between the knowledge and training acquired in the university and the competencies required in their job. Because of this, the Galician Government is going to include the labour market insertion rate in the indicators taking into account to establish the universities financing.

In this poster we present information about the competencies required in the current employment.

Key words: graduates; labour insertion market; competencies; higher education; skills, knowledge and attitudes;

TECHNICAL DATA

Population: graduates in SUG during the academic years 2001-2003, 2003-2005, 2005-2006 and 2006-2007.

Sample: for each degree and campus (subpopulation) a random sample was selected, determining the size for the estimation of the proportion (with maximum variance) and setting absolute maximum error value of 10%, with a confidence level of 95%. See Table 1 for details.

Field work: telephone survey.

Questionnaire: a self-design questionnaire was used in all the studies, allowing for comparison.

Results display: results are presented by branches of knowledge, according to the standard division in scientific fields. Specifically: Health Sciences, Sciences, Engineering and Architecture, Social and Legal Sciences (I, II, III and IV) and Arts and Humanities (I and II). For a detailed description of the subgroups, see ACSUG (2010).

Academic years	2006-2007	2005-2006	2003-2005	2001-2003
Population	8689	10280	23107	23700
Sample	4569	5362	7967	4145
% surveyed	52,58%	52,16%	34,48%	17,49%
Fieldwork	May-June 2009	May 2008	April-June 2007	June 2004

Table 1: Graduates in the SUG. Population and sample sizes.

COMPETENCIES

The term **competence** refers to the proper performance of the work, both in technical procedures (skills) and knowledge, and in attitudes and values.

Within the European Higher Education Area, the competences are understood as part and final product of the teaching-learning process in Higher Education, so that new degrees are designed not only in terms of contents, but also in function of the competences that the graduates must have at the end of the period in the university.

Therefore, it is crucial to design properly the new Bachelor's and Master's degrees, to know the final competencies required in job position.

RESULTS

The competencies (skills, knowledge and attitudes) perceived as most important for the current job performance are (see Table 2 for all the studies): *learning abilities, motivation, problem-solving ability, written and oral communication skills, adaptability, taking responsibilities and working in a team capacity.*

The competencies (skills, knowledge and attitudes) perceived as less important for the current job performance are (see Table 2 for all the studies): *foreign language knowledge, leadership, creativity, broad general knowledge and critical thinking.*

Branch	Competency	Value
Health Sciences	Practical field-specific	4.59
	Motivation	4.57
	Taking responsibilities	4.57
	Learning abilities	4.55
	Problem-solving ability	4.54
Sciences	Learning abilities	4.57
	Motivation	4.52
	Problem-solving ability	4.47
	Written and oral communication skills	4.38
	Planning, coordinating and organising	4.37
Engineering and Architecture	Learning abilities	4.53
	Problem-solving ability	4.48
	Motivation	4.44
	Working in a team capacity	4.37
	Adaptability	4.36
Social and Legal Sciences I	Learning abilities	4.48
	Motivation	4.47
	Written and oral communication skills	4.44
	Loyalty, honesty	4.43
	Adaptability	4.42
Social and Legal Sciences II	Learning abilities	4.51
	Loyalty, honesty	4.41
	Motivation	4.41
	Written and oral communication skills	4.39
	Adaptability	4.35
Social and Legal Sciences III	Motivation	4.66
	Written and oral communication skills	4.61
	Learning abilities	4.58
	Problem-solving ability	4.52
	Taking responsibilities	4.51
Social and Legal Sciences IV	Written and oral communication skills	4.47
	Problem-solving ability	4.42
	Learning abilities	4.37
	Adaptability	4.35
	Motivation	4.30
Arts and Humanities I	Motivation	4.46
	Learning abilities	4.35
	Written and oral communication skills	4.30
	Adaptability	4.28
	Working in a team capacity	4.25
Arts and Humanities II	Written and oral communication skills	4.70
	Learning abilities	4.67
	Motivation	4.58
	Loyalty, honesty	4.57
	Practical field-specific	4.57

Table 3: Skills, knowledge and attitudes by branches of knowledge. Graduates from 2006-2007.

Skills, knowledge and attitudes	2006-2007	2005-2006	2003-2005	2001-2003
Learning abilities	4.53	4.48	4.45	4.29
Motivation	4.51	4.50	4.45	4.26
Problem-solving ability	4.45	4.45	4.43	4.24
Written and oral communication skills	4.42	4.41	4.35	4.31
Adaptability	4.39	4.33	4.30	4.25
Taking responsibilities	4.38	4.39	4.35	4.13
Working in a team capacity	4.34	4.35	4.28	4.27
Practical field-specific	4.34	4.33	4.34	3.93
Loyalty, honesty	4.32	4.30	4.31	4.29
Planning, coordinating and organising	4.28	4.26	4.32	4.19
Initiative	4.25	4.22	4.21	4.03
Working independently capacity	4.22	4.18	4.15	4.20
Analytical ability	4.10	4.07	4.03	3.88
Theoretical field-specific	4.11	4.06	4.11	3.67
Working under pressure capacity	4.07	4.04	3.90	3.93
Computer skills	3.88	3.90	3.91	3.54
Critical thinking	3.85	3.87	3.85	3.53
Broad general knowledge	3.80	3.78	3.79	3.60
Creativity	3.72	3.70	3.74	3.56
Leadership	3.42	3.44	3.37	3.23
Foreign language knowledge	3.29	3.26	3.27	2.81

Table 2: Comparison with the previous studies. Scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest).

Analysing the evaluations made by the graduates according to branches of knowledge (Table 3, graduates from 2006-2007) graduates in all the branches indicated *learning abilities* and *motivation* among the five most valued competencies in their job performance.

Practical field-specific knowledge and *taking responsibilities*, obtain a higher value in Health Sciences than in the other branches and the whole system (SUG).

The most distinct profile in Social and Legal Sciences group, corresponds to Social and Legal Sciences III (which gathers degrees related to education and psychology), where the importance of skills such as *creativity* is higher valued than in other branches.

Graduates in Arts and Humanities perceived as most important *foreign language knowledge*, with values above the SUG average.

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