

RECURSOS INFORMATIVOS PARA LA INTERNACIONALIZACIÓN DE LA ETSIE DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DE GRANADA

INFORMATIVE RESOURCES FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION AT THE SCHOOL OF BUILDING ENGINEERING – UNIVERSITY OF GRANADA

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RESUMEN

Este artículo presenta una revisión de las estrategias implementadas para informar a los estudiantes matriculados en el Grado en Ingeniería de la Edificación y el Grado Doble en Ingeniería de la Edificación y Economía en la Escuela de Ingeniería de la Edificación de la Universidad de Granada. El estudio examina la difusión de información sobre la internacionalización y las oportunidades de movilidad estudiantil que ofrecen tanto la Escuela como el Vicerrectorado de Internacionalización.

Aunque se hace hincapié principalmente en los estudiantes que salen al extranjero, el estudio también considera la importancia de apoyar a los estudiantes procedentes de Europa, América Latina y otras zonas del mundo. Se subraya la importancia de mantener un calendario regular de sesiones informativas a lo largo del curso académico, con un mínimo recomendado de dos sesiones en el primer semestre y tres en el segundo. Esto es especialmente pertinente dada la complejidad del programa de doble titulación y la colaboración continua con la Builders School Engineers, de Caen (Francia).

Los resultados sugieren que garantizar que los estudiantes estén bien informados sobre toda la gama de oportunidades internacionales disponibles es esencial para su crecimiento académico y desarrollo profesional. Sin embargo, lograr la participación de los estudiantes sigue siendo un reto. Como respuesta, el equipo académico explora y aplica continuamente estrategias de comunicación eficaces para captar su interés y fomentar la participación activa.

Palabras clave: Estudiantes de Ingeniería de la Construcción; internacionalización; movilidad estudiantil; asesoramiento académico; educación superior.

ABSTRACT

This paper presents a review on the strategies implemented to inform students enrolled in the Degree in Building Engineering and the Double Degree in Building Engineering and Economics at the School of Building Engineering, University of Granada. The study examines the dissemination of information on internationalization and student mobility opportunities provided by both the School and the Vice-Rectorate for Internationalization, with particular emphasis on engaging both newly admitted students and those possessing prior academic experience.

Although the primary emphasis is placed on outgoing students, the study also considers the relevance of supporting incoming students from Europe, Latin America, and other areas of the world. The importance of maintaining a regular schedule of informative sessions throughout the academic year is underlined, with a recommended minimum of two sessions in the first semester and three in the second. This is especially pertinent given the complexity of the double degree program and the ongoing collaboration with the Builders School Engineers, Caen (France).

The findings suggest that ensuring students are well-informed about the full range of international opportunities available is essential for their academic growth and professional development. However, engaging students remains a challenge. As a response, the academic team continuously explores and applies effective communication strategies to capture their interest and encourage active participation.

Keywords: Building Engineering students; internationalization; student mobility; academic advising; higher education.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper presents a case study examining the implementation of visual communication strategies aimed at informing students in both the Bachelor's and Double Degree programs about the various internationalization opportunities available through the School of Building Engineering at the University of Granada.

As part of our support framework, it is advisable to hold at least two meetings with students during the first semester and three during the second semester, considering that there is an extra call for Erasmus + in the month of April or May. This scheduling takes into account the specific needs of the Double Degree program and the international workshop/Summer School conducted in collaboration with the Builders School Engineers (ESITC) in Caen, France, which takes place at the end of the second semester.

While the primary focus is on outgoing students from our School, it is also essential to consider incoming students from Europe, Latin America, and other parts of the world. Although our primary institutional responsibility lies with students undertaking mobility abroad, the experience acquired from the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of also maintaining comprehensive information on incoming students, ensuring they have access to all necessary materials, and being able to locate and support them when needed.

2. MATERIALS AND STRATEGIES

2.1 Informative Meeting for First-Year Building Engineering Students Led by the School Director and Management Team

The governance team of our School, under the leadership of the Director, has consistently emphasized the importance of providing students with comprehensive information about the opportunities and resources available to them throughout their academic journey at both the School of Building Engineering and the University of Granada.

From the very outset of their university experience, it is considered essential that students are well-informed about the academic, administrative, and internationalization possibilities they can access. Consequently, during the first week of classes, an introductory address is delivered to first-year students' class by class to welcome them and outline key aspects of their studies. This is followed by a more detailed general meeting held in the Auditorium, where students receive specific information, guidance, and supporting materials designed to facilitate their integration and engagement with the School's programs.

In the case of mobility, a specific presentation has been given for these occasions, delving into important elements to be aware of throughout the degree program. The subsequent slides have been carefully prepared to support this event, ensuring that the content is clear, accessible, and comprehensive.



Figure 1: Example of Slide with the first-year students. The international logo has been created by Fabián García Carrillo

2.2 Annual International Workshop in Building Engineering

Prior to the commencement of the Erasmus selection process, the School of Building Engineering (ETSIE) organizes an International Workshop, held in the main hall of the School. The program for this event is communicated in advance via personalized email to all students enrolled at the School.

As part of the workshop, the School invites academic staff from partner universities to present their institutions and countries of origin. In addition, representatives from the University of Granada with responsibilities in the academic management of internationalization are invited to contribute. The program also includes round-table discussions involving students who have previously participated in international mobility programs, current incoming students hosted by ETSIE, and academic coordinators responsible for supervising and approving Learning Agreements. These tutors play a key role in guiding Erasmus students in the academic planning and validation of their study periods abroad. And, also included in the program of our yearly Workshop features informational stands staffed by scholarship students or volunteers available throughout the morning and afternoon, offering students the opportunity to engage directly with international mobility content and resources.



Figure 2: Our first poster for the information Workshop in the academic year 2018-2019



Figure 3: Our last poster for the information Workshop. The logo was designed by Fabián García Carrillo.

For each information session, or for the International Workshop, or for any event related to international calls, students are notified individually via institutional email, and announcements are also published on the school's official website and other platforms used by our school.

2.3 Information Sessions on Mobility Programs (National, European, and International)

Along with this annual event, the School holds regular information sessions throughout the academic year. These meetings serve to address both the key stages of the official mobility calendar and any emerging opportunities, regulatory changes, or student needs that may arise. This ongoing communication ensures continuous, updated support for students engaged in or preparing for international or even, national mobility. The emergence of new mobility opportunities can occur at any time during the academic year, and we are committed to encouraging Building Engineering students to participate as actively as possible in these significant initiatives.

The content of these sessions provides comprehensive information on the full range of mobility programs available through the University of Granada in which Building Engineering students may participate. This includes European mobility opportunities (Erasmus+), international placements through the University's own programs (Programa Propio UGR), internships offered via the UGR's Estancias Formativas initiative, national mobility programs (SICUE), different Arqus Programs, the program for the Final Project of our studies taken place in Morocco, and finally, the Double Degree program in collaboration with the Builders School Engineers (ESITC) in Caen, France, and also, any category of mobility offered by the University of Granada.

In our information sessions, visual aids are employed based on the understanding that students more effectively retain and comprehend information presented visually. The content of the PowerPoint presentations is delivered in a concise and summarized manner during the sessions. Due to the extensive scope of these presentations, it is impractical to cover all slides within the limited timeframe of meetings with undergraduate students; nevertheless, the complete presentation is made accessible for students who require more detailed information regarding specific mobility destinations. During the first sessions, students

are presented with an overview of all mobility options offered by the University of Granada. The aim is to encourage them to begin considering potential destinations and to familiarize themselves with the available international programs and what the University of Granada offers them.

Students are directed from our official website to the official website of the Vice-Rectorate for Internationalization, which serves as the primary and most reliable source of updated information regarding mobility programs. Emphasis is placed on the importance of students independently accessing and engaging with this information as part of their preparation.

Our presentations also include guidance on administrative procedures at both the School and University levels, providing students with an understanding and learning of institutional processes in general and those related to enrolment and mobility opportunities. Within the session, particular emphasis is placed on fostering student autonomy by encouraging individuals to actively engage with the available digital resources and to assume responsibility for their own preparatory processes.

In the sessions for our students becoming out-going Erasmus, an initial overview of the Erasmus+ destinations currently available through the School is presented as a foundation for further exploration. This preliminary information serves to orient students within the broader framework of available options. Following this, students are encouraged to undertake a more thorough and autonomous investigation in order to identify the destinations that best align with their individual academic goals, professional aspirations, and personal preferences.

We try to advise students on all the necessary and practical steps they should take before embarking on their mobility adventure, whether national or international. Our goal is to advise students on all the necessary and practical steps they should take before embarking on their mobility adventure, whether national or international, and thus avoid any undesirable situations that may arise during their mobility. We must bear in mind that, unfortunately, students tend to be influenced by rumours and so not usually go directly to the sources, which causes them numerous inconveniences and unpleasant situations.

In our various presentations to students, certain slides are delivered in Spanish, consistent with the language of the session, while others are presented in English to better prepare students for future scenarios in which they will be required to communicate in a second language – most commonly English – as the lingua franca of the moment.

[/ Movilidad / ESTUDIANTES](#)

Movilidad estudiantes

MOVILIDAD ESTUDIANTES

Outgoing students

Incoming students

Outgoing students

Información general sobre programas

Los estudiantes de la Escuela Técnica Superior de Ingeniería de Edificación pueden realizar parte de sus estudios fuera de la Universidad de Granada, ya sea en centros nacionales o extranjeros. Los programas más importantes de movilidad de estudiantes en los que participa la ETSIE son los siguientes:

- Programa Erasmus+
- Programa ARQUS
- Programa de Libre Movilidad
- Programa Sicue
- Programa Mentor
- Estancias Formativas
- Programa Propio de Movilidad Internacional
- Procedimientos telemáticos (Todos los procedimientos telemáticos del Vicerrectorado de Internacionalización de la Universidad de Granada).

Convocatoria ERASMUS+ Grado:

- Convocatoria ERASMUS+Grado

(Vicerrectorado de Internacionalización UGR).

Información general ERASMUS+ Grado:

- Tutorial e Información de ayuda Erasmus+Grado
- Financiación de las Ayudas
- Calculadora individual financiación Erasmus
- Tabla de conversión de calificaciones
- Reglamento de la Universidad de Granada sobre Movilidad Internacional de Estudiantes
- Criterios para el reconocimiento de la mención de matrícula de honor en movilidad internacional
- Documentación necesaria para estudiantes Erasmus Out
- Firma de documentación (sede electrónica)
- Trámites obligatorios para estudiantado seleccionado ERASMUS+
- Reglamento de movilidad internacional de estudiantes

Los/as tutores/as académicos, profesores/as de la Escuela Técnica Superior de Ingeniería de Edificación

Figure 4: Student's International information in our homepage

An example of the misinformation held by our students in the case of the University of Granada, is their complete ignorance of the existence of a Regulation on International Student Mobility, approved at the regular meeting of the Governing Council on June 26, 2019 and, revised on February 7, 2023. These regulations take into account all the rights and obligations of the entire university community, including, of course, the student body, regarding mobility in general, and reflect any cases that may arise.



Figure 5: Presentation out-goings. Own creation.

2.4 Induction Day and Welcome Session for Incoming Building Engineering Students

Finally, each faculty and school at the University of Granada organizes two “Induction Days” during the course, with the primary objective of providing incoming students with as much relevant information as possible. These welcome days are suggested by our Office of International Relations (ORI) at the University of Granada (UGR). The ORI itself holds a much more general meeting, leaving us, the centers, to be more specific about the degrees we offer.

These sessions are held during the first week of September and the second week of February, coinciding with the start of each academic semester. Students are informed about both their receiving faculty's and our institution's General Induction Days by the Office of International Relations (ORI) of the University of Granada. This timing is especially important given that many European exchange students attend for only one semester.

In our School, during these induction sessions, students are introduced to various aspects of life in Spain, particularly focusing on our region, Andalusia, and the province of Granada. The presentation covers the School, the University and all the services offered for the students and continues with key cultural and historical elements, including major landmarks, prominent athletes, well-known musicians, regional architecture, gastronomy, and more. This welcome presentation is more comprehensive than the other informational sessions offered to students, lasting approximately 45 minutes. It provides an in-depth introduction to the cultural, social, and geographical context in which students will be living during their five-to nine-month stay. Entitled *A Cultural Picture of the University of Granada and Our City*, the presentation includes approximately 125 slides. Despite its length, it remains highly engaging, offering a rich and dynamic overview of the city, the Andalusian region, and Spain as a whole.

3. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it is crucial that students are well-informed about the wide range of opportunities provided by both their School and University. This knowledge allows them to make thoughtful decisions that support their academic development and professional goals. However, our experience shows that ensuring students receive and absorb this information can be quite challenging. Our team has implemented various strategies to attract students and facilitate their access to relevant resources, but often we find that success comes only

when we manage to capture their attention during their limited free time. Because of this, it is essential to continue developing creative and effective ways to involve students, helping them to stay informed and empowered to make choices that will benefit their educational journey and future careers.

Drawing from extensive experience in both management and instruction within technical schools, we have observed that capturing and maintaining student's attention presents a significant and ongoing challenge. This difficulty can likely be attributed to the rigorous and demanding nature of their academic programs, which require students to dedicate substantial amounts of time and effort to achieve satisfactory and fulfilling outcomes. Consequently, students often prioritize their core studies, leaving limited availability or willingness to engage in additional activities or informational sessions. Understanding this context is crucial for developing effective strategies that respect their workload while still encouraging meaningful engagement for their profitable future.

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