

The organisation of teaching at UPF

Guide to undergraduate and postgraduate courses



UNIVERSITAT
POMPEU FABRA

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postgraduate courses

CENTRE FOR TEACHING QUALITY
AND INNOVATION

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Centre for Teaching Quality and Innovation
Barcelona, February 2009

Preface

Universitat Pompeu Fabra is firmly committed to fully incorporated in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), as shown by the fact that it is the Catalan public university that has implemented the most undergraduate courses in this 2008-2009 academic year. UPF also plans to adapt the majority of the courses that it will be offering in the coming 2009-2010 academic year. In order to reach this point, our centres have gradually worked to include the ECTS credit methodology in many subjects and participated in various initiatives promoted by the public administrations, such as the pilot plan for adaptation to the EHEA promoted by the Generalitat (government) of Catalonia.

All these transformations that have been introduced into our university teaching are aimed at improving the quality of education and benefiting our students' learning. A key factor in this process of improvement – obviously - is the work done by our lecturers. That is why the CQUID, as the support body for our teaching staff for teaching quality, has produced this publication. Its aim in doing so is to facilitate the practical application of the principles of the Bologna process to teaching.

During the production of this publication, it has received the active co-operation and involvement of many academic managers and lecturers in a personal capacity, and their contributions and experience have enriched this text. The various perspectives which fortunately coexist at our university mean that the teaching there is not necessary undertaken in a monolithic or uniform manner. There may instead be a whole range of possibilities, in terms of both how they are adapted to the various disciplines and the freedom to apply teaching methodologies that are a feature of lecturers' work in higher education.

UPF is therefore firmly committed to adopting a flexible framework, as it did when the new courses were planned. Flexibility, rigorous standards, diversity and innovation must guarantee the active learning that our society demands. In any event, the lecturers and students will have the final word.

Josep Joan Moreso
Rector of UPF

Summary of the proposal





- **Basic requirements of the EHEA**

1. The main objective is to acquire and develop competences.
2. The student must play an active role throughout the entire educational cycle.
3. Evaluation must be continuous, focused on achieving competences and promote self-evaluation.
4. Much of the learning must take place outside the classroom.
5. The use of information and communication technologies and online learning must be encouraged.

The teaching plan is the tool that enables the subject to be redesigned based on these assumptions.

- **Organisation of teaching**

Teaching - and therefore the Plan for Teaching Activity (PAD) - must be organised according to ECTS credits.

- **Proposals for the organisation of teaching**

These are general recommendations, which must be made more specific depending on whether the courses concerned are undergraduate or postgraduate, for each specific qualification, depending on the characteristics of the subject and the year (first, second, third, fourth or others).

1. **Teaching hours**

Taking into account that at UPF, 1 ECTS credit is equivalent to 25 hours' work by the student, the percentage of face-to-face teaching must be between 20% and 35% of the credits. For example, a subject which had 5 credits in the previous system would involve the following teaching hours:

- **Previous system: 5 credits = 50 teaching hours.**
- **Bologna system: 4 ECTS credits = 100 hours of work (20-35 teaching hours + 80-65 study hours).**

2. Percentage of lectures in teaching hours

- **Undergraduate:** 70% of teaching hours at most. In the example above, in the 20-35 teaching hours of the subject with 4 ECTS credits, the time spent in lectures may not exceed 14-24.5 hours.
- **Postgraduate:** this may be around 40%.

3. Student groups

- **Plenary sessions:** all the students registered in a subject or as many as the centre deems appropriate, depending on several variable factors (teaching body, facilities, content, etc.).
- **Seminar lectures, workshops, practical sessions:** between 15 and 40 students (40 stipulated for maximum flexibility in the various situations).
- **Laboratory practical sessions, computer rooms, etc.:** 30-50 students (50% of the plenary group). Various alternatives for the organisation of teaching based on these criteria are included at the end of this document.

• The authorisation and validation process for the new organisation of a subject

Step 1: the lecturer proposes the teaching plan to the dean's office or the department management, as appropriate.

Step 2: the dean's office or department management reviews it and authorises it if appropriate.

Step 3: it is implemented.

Step 4: the CQUID carries out the final validation based on an analysis and evaluation of the results.

1. Basic requirements of the EHEA





1.1 Developing the relevant skills in students

The basic objective of the university learning process in the EHEA does not focus on guaranteeing that students will accumulate knowledge, which will become obsolete very soon; instead it focuses on fostering other educational aspects, such as acquiring basic competences. These include those specific to each discipline and those of a general cross-disciplinary nature (common to any degree course), such as: **the ability to learn, the ability to solve problems, teamwork skills, autonomy, initiative, creativity, self-organisation, the ability to speak in public, etc.**

Education must therefore not focus strictly on the transfer or command of content; **it must also focus on the more complex objective of acquiring competences.** In this respect, training must use the professional and research activities linked to a qualification or subject as its benchmark, instead of only focusing on the content of a discipline. As well as the final test, evaluation of learning must also include evaluation methods that are more appropriate and pertinent to the teaching and research practices concerned.

Learning situations must therefore be designed that foster the range of knowledge, skills and attitudes comprising the benchmark competences and their implementation.

COMPETENCE: this is the range of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to carry out a given occupation and the ability to mobilise and apply these resources in a specific environment, in order to produce an end result.

The lecturer must consider the following question: What is the best strategy or activity for students to acquire the competences I want them to have when they finish my subject?

1.2. Placing the student at the centre of the learning process

The fact that ECTS credits are calculated based on the total hours that students must spend on a subject (and not those spent by the teacher, as has been the case to date) is a firm indication that students and their needs are now the focus of training.

Placing students at the centre of the learning process means that they have **a more active role in their education, in terms of both what they do in the classroom, in the presence of teaching staff, and outside it.** Attending class cannot imply a passive attitude: one of taking notes that must be subsequently studied in a more or less reasoned manner. Students must attend class and undertake dynamic tasks there: they must work with materials that enable them to search for and assimilate information, work as a team, present results, take decisions, as well as – obviously – memorising. Much of their learning will take place autonomously, outside the classroom, and they must be aware that this is not an optional extra, but rather is necessary to pass the subjects, because it is the only way of achieving the comprehensive learning that is the objective.

This also means that interaction between the lecturer and the students increases. As a result, small groups become one of the key organisational tools for achieving the increase in interaction and exchange between the lecturer and students. Organising these groups based on seminars, group tutorials, workshops and practical classes, with a small number of students, means that the opportunities for generating participation and interaction in the classroom are increased. This in turn leads to a greater exchange between students and teaching staff.

It is important to plan the work that students must do both outside and inside the classroom. Questions like “What do the students have to learn?” and “Which are the best activities and the best interaction for them to learn it (in class and outside)?” are more interesting than “What am I going to teach them today?” or “Which content is it today?”

TRADITIONAL Dynamic

- Attendance at classes
- Individual study

UPF proposal

- Attendance and participation in class
- Guided work
- Autonomous work
- Teamwork
- Individual study

1.3. Evaluation must be continuous, focused on achieving competences and promote self-evaluation

Evaluation is a process that is directly linked to the quality of teaching. It is in itself an essential tool to achieve effective learning. In fact, no innovation will be effective if it is not accompanied by innovations in how evaluation is conceived.

a) Continuing

This is the evaluation that takes place during learning, and its objective is to guarantee that it proceeds as planned, to detect difficulties in time, to provide students with feedback to guide them in their learning, and to make the necessary changes to the programme. It can start with initial diagnostic activities that enable evaluation of the prior competences that learners start with, and outline the gaps or needs that they present.

The aim of continuous evaluation is to achieve effective informative feedback for the students. It also aims to adapt what is being taught to the results of the evaluation; instead of finding out whether the students know something at the end of the process, it is necessary to check whether they are learning properly throughout the process.

b) Focused on the acquisition of competences

It is only possible to confirm that a competence has been acquired when it has been tested in a realistic context. Evaluation therefore involves designing an activity in which students can demonstrate the level they have acquired in that competence.

That is why evaluation cannot be considered as a process that is separate from the rest of the course, but should instead be integrated within it, and be consistent with the overall methodology and approach of the subject or the degree course.

c) Self-evaluation

The ultimate goal of university education must be self-regulation, i.e. for students to be able to autonomously understand the competences and content in their discipline that are becoming obsolete; the learning and recycling that they need to undertake, how to go about this, and carry them out. Because the state of knowledge in each discipline is changing very quickly, as are professional practices, adopting a self-regulating aspect is decisive. That is why it is important to gradually include self-evaluation tools in courses, so that students have significant levels of responsibility and autonomy, under the supervision of the teaching staff.

For example, in an examination in which the students have to show whether they remember some content, the only result of learning that is achieved is memorising. It is difficult to achieve any change if we only attempt to change the entire methodology and apply different activities, but if we finally continue to carry out evaluation in a traditional way.

The lecturer must consider the following question: How do I give back activities to the students? How do students know whether they are making adequate progress during the term?

If the desired competence for the student to achieve is to be able to speak in public and to be able to argue properly, an oral test that shows to what extent the student has acquired this competence must be considered.

Some practical advice for effective evaluation

- a) **Consider plenty of sources of evaluation and at least three types of activities:** final examination or coursework, activities that take place fortnightly or every three weeks and evaluated contributions or participations.
- b) **Guarantee clarity and transparency:** the evaluation criteria must be publicly set out in detail from the very beginning. They must be presented to the students and discussed in order to ensure that everyone (students and teaching staff) understand them in the same way.
- c) **Specify the percentage that each evaluation source accounts for in the students' final grade.** It is advisable that the final examination and coursework account for around 50%, with the rest coming from sources of continuous evaluation (practical sessions or exercises, class participation, online work, etc.).

- d) **Include exercises that create a real life context.** In what type of situation can I anticipate that students will need or be able to use this knowledge? It is therefore necessary to create a question or problem that is as appropriate to this real life context as possible.
- e) Try and give “FIDeLITY feedback” to students: 1. FREQUENT: give frequent feedback (providing that this is possible for the lecturer); 2. IMMEDIATE: give feedback as quickly as possible; 3. DISCRIMINATING: clearly define the difference between poor, acceptable and exceptional work; 4. LOVING: be empathetic when giving feedback (Feenk, L., 2004).

1.4. The students’ work outside the classroom must be guided

Appropriately supervising and managing the students’ work outside the classroom and integrating it with the work done in the classroom is one of the most complex practical questions in the implementation of the methodological change.

Implications for the student

- a) The students’ workload outside the classroom becomes more important. They have less class hours with the lecturer and more autonomous tasks, for which they have to try and find the solutions on their own account and therefore have to take the initiative.
- b) They must manage and plan their study time properly and must acquire autonomous study and work skills: e.g. searching for and processing information, selecting, prioritising, etc.
- c) They must make sure that they fully understand what to do in the activities set for them, and must find strategies for solving them, with the guidance and orientation provided by the lecturer.
- d) They must become used to preparing for classes before attending them. If they see the lecturer less and must make contributions to sessions in a small group, they must prepare for them in advance.
- e) They have more opportunities for personal interaction with the lecturer (in seminars, online, and in tutorials). Students must make oral contributions, overcome shyness, and engage in dialogue with the teacher to present their doubts and to make progress in their learning.

Implications for the lecturer

- a) When designing the subject, it is necessary to clearly define and distribute which content will be dealt with in the classroom in plenary sessions, which content the students will work on outside the classroom based on activities and exercises, and which content will be covered in small group sessions: seminars, workshops, laboratory sessions, etc. It is important that all these options are well connected.
- b) The activities that are to be covered outside the classroom must be clear and defined, so that the students fully understand what is required of them and can take full advantage of the activity. They should ideally be practical and specific tasks, which are set in a professional context and in the discipline being studied, and should be linked to the theoretical content that is the focus of learning; i.e. it is only possible to carry out the tasks if the students learn the appropriate theoretical content and apply it to the specific situation.
- c) It is vital, especially during the initial courses, to provide work guides or reading guides to accompany students while they are undertaking the activity. A useful resource is to provide models for undertaking similar tasks, or if it is an open or multiple response task, to provide examples of model answers given by students in previous years.
- d) It is also very important to produce good material for work outside the classroom: cases, self-evaluation exercises, closed questions, simulations, etc.
- e) Which activities can be evaluated and which ones cannot must be defined at the outset. The yardsticks and criteria for successful completion of the tasks must be given (even if they are only outlines for guidance purposes).

1.5. Encourage use of ICTs

In face-to-face training, **ICTs can used before, during and after the class**. Some examples of this are: if material is presented on the subject website or in the virtual classroom, or if support for this activity is given as well as the face-to-face classes, students work on and review it before attending class. As a result, when they come to class they are not starting from scratch, expecting the lecturer to explain everything to them; instead, they can use the contact time with the lecturer to raise questions, doubts and to discuss aspects that they have not understood, etc. It is therefore possible to work on the content in more detail. At the same time, it can be used for self-evaluation tests, and provides opportunities for communication and co-operation between the students and the lecturer.

Likewise, when a face-to-face subject has an online area, face-to-face contact is no longer the only procedure by which the lecturer can communicate with the students and which students can use to communicate among themselves. It is not necessary to wait for the next class to notify students of an interesting lecture, and students do not have to be in the classroom to undertake some work, because they can chat online or develop a wiki.

The reduction in face-to-face teaching of students in the classroom and the increase in work and time spent outside it provides more opportunities for using ICTs. Some advantages are as follows:

- It provides new opportunities for communication, co-operation, distribution of knowledge and taking activities forward; for example, the subject website or using the virtual classroom.
- It facilitates personal attention and monitoring of students by means of virtual tutorials.
- It enables students and groups to carry out self-evaluation and co-evaluation of their learning, and to undertake group work on a virtual basis, with no need for students to meet face to face.
- It improves information research, selection, and assessment and organisation skills.
- It enables students to hand in work and receive evaluation online anywhere, without having to attend class.

However, the use of ICTs in a subject also has other consequences:

- It significantly increases the time that the lecturer must spend working online: this includes dealing with e-mails and enquiries, managing online materials, adding to the website, etc.
- It highlights the difficulties that students have with using ICTs (lack of knowledge of programs, online security, etc.), and also requires lecturers to undertake training in areas that are not part of their programme.
- It increases teachers' and students' dependence on online materials: it means that access to the subject area is necessary in class (the virtual classroom, website, links), and that a large proportion of face-to-face sessions and seminars are based around online materials.

1.6. Active methodologies

In order to achieve the points mentioned above, it is necessary to consider the key aspect: the teaching and learning methodology.

Active learning methodologies assign a very significant role to the students, who build up their knowledge based on patterns, activities and scenarios designed by the lecturer.

Active methodologies focus on "activating" the students, i.e. on making them become involved, and on making them do things rather than merely listening. They therefore involve the students working inside and outside the classroom, assuming a participative role and attitude, and being active and creative at all times.

The learning achieved using active methodologies promotes the students' critical turn of mind and encourages them to think of themselves as the builder of their own knowledge and as playing an important role in the work done in class, as a basic tool in understanding the problems that have to be resolved and the areas studied.

The **objectives of active methodologies** are mainly to make students:

- Develop skills in the research, selection, analysis and evaluation of information, playing a more active role in the construction of knowledge.

- Participate in activities that enable them to exchange experiences and opinions with their classmates.
- Interact with their environment by means of activities such as project work, case studies and proposing solutions to problems.
- Develop their autonomy, critical thought, co-operative attitudes, professional skills and capacity for self-evaluation.

The range of active methods is wide because it includes both dynamics and activities – the objective of which is to “activate” the lectures - and other more complex methods such as collaborative learning, project-based learning, problem-based learning, role playing, simulations, and case studies, among others.

Problem-based learning: the students, either in a group, autonomously, or guided by the lecturer, must find the answer to a question or problem, in such a way that in order to achieve this properly, they must seek, understand and include the basic concepts of the subject.

Project-based learning: in a group, the students carry out a project that includes various steps and follows a sequence. The content is provided as progress is made on the project, and as it is completed.

The case study: this consists of working on a real situation that is normally linked to a decision, opportunity, problem or a complex question faced by a person or an organisation in a specific environment. Using their knowledge and skills, students must analyse the information, define their position, experiment and make decisions.

Co-operative learning: students always work in a team to carry out various tasks (jigsaws or puzzles, decision-making, production of documents) that have been designed so that they cannot be undertaken without everyone’s participation and so that they promote positive interdependence (i.e. the students help each other and the person who helps the most receives the best grade). The students receive prior training to be able to undertake teamwork.

Combined formulas: these enable various techniques like those presented to be included. They do not focus on any single one, but instead use several: at a specific point they consider an individual case study; at another point, a co-operative activity or a cross-disciplinary project throughout the course.

Aquestes metodologies es caracteritzen per un canvi gradual en la divisió de tasques en el procés d’aprenentatge, que es va desplaçant de qui ensenya cap a qui aprèn (vegeu-ne la comparació a l’annex).

These methodologies involve a gradual change in the division of tasks within the learning process, which shifts their focus from who teaches to who learns (see the comparison in the appendix).

The teaching method changes as the students' independence and their familiarity with this type of technique increases. When implementing them, it should be remembered that they are not always suitable for all students. First year students will probably need guidance and the lecturer's presence to a greater extent, while in subsequent years they will become more autonomous in the overall learning process.

All these techniques involve the students working inside and outside the classroom. Their involvement in tasks and projects, and the conscious aim of learning through these activities, should enable the desired learning to be constructed. Despite this, in order for it to be achieved effectively, it is essential that it is guided and monitored properly by the lecturer.

2. Recommendations for organising teaching





After defining the main requirements for the methodological approach promoted by the EHEA, it is necessary to review how the subject is organised. This basically involves the following two aspects:

I. DISTRIBUTION OF ECTS CREDITS: how the ECTS credits in the subject are distributed and organised, i.e. what percentage is allocated to the students' face-to-face contact in the classroom and how much is allocated to learning outside it.

II. STUDENT GROUPS: what type of groups are created to implement the techniques and methods mentioned.

In short, it is **necessary to decide upon the most appropriate architecture** for the subject so that its learning can be constructed, based on the techniques and methods that are deemed most relevant depending on the type of subject, the number of students, the objectives, or whether it is a subject in the first or final year, etc.

It is first necessary to bear in mind that there is at present no European, Spanish or autonomous regional regulation that stipulates how that is to be done. However, it is true that the general guidelines outline a trend, and the trend is in all certainty towards a reduction in face-to-face teaching and lectures in favour of student autonomy and work.

Despite UPF having an institutional approach, it also believes in flexibility, so there is some room for manoeuvre when deciding how to implement each course and the most suitable way of organising it, providing that this meets the pedagogical criteria mentioned above.

Having clarified that issue, some recommendations and proposals are presented below.

FORMULA FOR MOVING FROM TRADITIONAL CREDITS TO ECTS CREDITS

The approximate equivalent of credits can be calculated based on the annual number of credits that could be registered in the pre-Bologna system (75 credits) and the annual number of credits that can be registered in the Bologna system (60 credits).

$$\begin{array}{r} 6 \text{ credits} \text{ — } 75 \text{ credits} \\ x \text{ credits} \text{ — } 60 \text{ ECTS credits} \\ x = 4.8 \text{ ECTS credits (5 ECTS credits)} \end{array}$$

2.1. How to distribute subject credits

-What teaching load or amount of face-to-face teaching in the classroom (class hours with a large group and seminar) should the subject have?

The recommended percentage for the students' teaching load in the classroom is between 20% and 35% of the total credits for the subject. The rest is allocated to work done on the individual or group activities set.

Why?

If the objective is for students to undertake more active learning, with an increase in their autonomy and the work done outside the classroom individually and as part of a team, they must have enough time to be able to do it. Furthermore, the only way to learn how to be competent in something, i.e. how to do it, is by practice, or "learning by doing." As a result, the teaching staff must be able to assess the most suitable load for each subject.

-If teaching has to combine lectures, practical sessions, seminars, workshops, group tutorials and supervised work, what percentage should be allocated to each item?

It is advisable that lectures, which naturally take place in a large group session, account for at most 70% of the students' total teaching load. The rest should be the other activities mentioned above, such as practical sessions, seminars, workshops and group tutorials; in other words, the type considered most appropriate in each subject, depending on its characteristics and the competences that are to be developed in it.

In postgraduate courses, this percentage can be reduced to around 40%.

Why?

Lectures still play a very important role in the students' learning. They are the point at which the teaching staff has face-to-face contact with all the students, either with one group or more; they are also the most personalised times at the beginning and end of the subject. Furthermore, a good presentation session is very effective for setting out some basic concepts to a large number of students. Likewise, lectures increasingly tend to include activities that enable students to contribute, by asking questions and showing an active attitude.

However, this cannot be the sole main teaching technique. It is instead necessary to make progress towards techniques that make more work by the students possible. As mentioned above, active techniques are difficult to implement in plenary sessions and lectures. What is more feasible is implementing these techniques in a seminar, workshop, group tutorial or practical session format.

2.2. What types of groups are most suitable for implementing these techniques and methods?

The following are recommended:

- **Plenary sessions:** all the students registered in the subject. As many as considered appropriate.
- **Seminar lectures and workshops:** between 15 and 40 students. The ideal number of students for seminars is between 12 and 20. However, other types of teaching organisation can also be considered that enable more students to be included, although it must always be borne in mind that increasing the number of students reduces interactivity.
- **Laboratory practical sessions, in computer rooms:** 30-50 students (depending on the type of course).
- **Group tutorials:** between 3 and 8 students. Working groups can usually be this size. However, it should be borne in mind that an even number of students in the group makes it possible to subdivide them into pairs or equivalent smaller groups, which may be useful when organising tasks.

Based on these flexible and rough criteria, each course, lecturer and team of lecturers must decide which groups to create in order to provide a response to the techniques and methods to be covered.

Why?

Obviously, lectures can involve a large number of students, as the main purpose is to transmit basic knowledge. The numbers can therefore be large, although the larger the group, the fewer opportunities there will be for promoting interactivity.

Meanwhile, the aim of seminar lectures and workshops are for students to carry out tasks, participate, contribute, present, asks questions, etc.

Stimulating all this is more feasible in smaller groups. In laboratory practical sessions or in a computer room or on a visit outside the

university, etc., it is possible to be more flexible with group sizes because resources can naturally be used. However, it should be borne in mind that increasing the number of students makes control and monitoring difficult. Finally, group tutorials usually take place in order to monitor a group's work, to analyse an issue in greater depth or to consider a case, a problem, etc. In this case, the objective is for the lecturer and the students to have the closest contact possible in order to achieve appropriate academic supervision.

3. Proposals and examples of how to organise teaching





All the proposals presented here are a combination of plenary lectures and small participative groups (seminars, workshops, practical sessions, group monitoring tutorials), so that they active methods can be used. None of these proposals include tutorials (which are deemed to be personal attention for enquiries in the office) within the teaching timetable. Group tutorials are deemed to be a small group, as are seminars and workshops.

3.1. Plenary sessions + seminar lectures

Combines	Plenary sessions + seminar lectures
Teaching load	The students' teaching load in the classroom is equivalent to 20% of the value of the ECTS credit in hours. The rest (80%) is study, individual and group work, and carrying out the tasks assigned and activities proposed.
Distribution of sessions	Plenary sessions are 70% of the students' total teaching load. Seminar lectures account for 30% of the teaching load.
Types of groups	Plenary sessions: the entire class. Seminar lectures: 16 to 20 students.
Example	1 subject of 5 ECTS credits = 125 study hours > 25 teaching hours: 18 lectures and 8 seminars (of 16-20 students).

N.B. This organisational approach enables practically all the active methodologies to be used, except project-based learning. It is suitable for all years, but a great deal of training and preparation is necessary in the first year in order to carry out the seminars properly.

It is important to adapt the volume of work involved in the task to the organisation of the subject and vice versa.

Organising subjects in large group sessions and seminars sometimes means that it is impossible for a single lecturer to teach the entire syllabus, and several people have to do so. In this case, it is advisable to establish which senior lecturer or lecturer with the most experience in the subject is in charge.

3.2. Lectures + workshop or practical sessions

Combines	Plenary sessions + lectures + workshop or practical sessions
Teaching load	The students' teaching load in the classroom is equivalent to 30% of the value of the ECTS credit in hours. The rest (70%) is allocated to study, individual and group work, and carrying out the tasks assigned and activities proposed.
Distribution of sessions	Plenary sessions account for 80% of the students' total teaching load. Workshops or practical sessions account for 30% of the teaching load.
Types of groups	Plenary sessions: the entire class. Workshop or practical sessions: approximately 40 students.
Example	Example: 5 ECTS credits = 125 study hours > from 37.5 teaching hours to 30 lecture hours and 7.5 practical or workshop hours.

N.B. This organisational approach has more face-to-face teaching and more lectures. It may be more appropriate for first year subjects or for subjects deemed to require a greater presence by the lecturer.

3.3. Lectures + practical sessions + group tutorials

Combines	Lectures + practical sessions + group tutorials
Teaching load	The students' teaching load in the classroom is equivalent to 33% of the value of the ECTS credit in hours. The rest (67%) is for work in individual and group study.
Distribution of sessions	Plenary sessions are 40% of the students' total teaching load. Practical sessions account for 30%, and the group tutorial sessions the remaining 30%.
Types of groups	Plenary sessions are for the entire class group. Practical sessions are for half the class group and group tutorials are for working groups.
Example	6 ECTS credits = 150 study hours. Hours of teaching load: from 50 to 20 plenary hours, 10 hours of practical sessions and 20 hours of group tutorials.
Weekly organisation (*)	2 hours of plenary session* + 2 hours (monitoring group tutorials: groups of 6-8 students who meet the lecturer once every fortnight) + 1 hour (practical sessions, half the class working on oral presentations of the progress of their work).

N.B. A plenary session is never presented in a lecture format, but instead is based on the doubts raised by students and their enquiries arising from reading the notes and/or subjects that have been presented online beforehand. Group tutorials focus on allowing each group to discuss the progress of their project with the lecturer and to raise doubts linked to their work.

Practical sessions are where the progress in each group's project is shared, by means of oral presentations.

3.4. Plenary sessions + practical sessions + teamwork sessions + seminar lectures + monitoring tutorial sessions

Combines	Plenary sessions + practical sessions + teamwork sessions + seminar lectures + monitoring tutorial sessions
Teaching load	The students' teaching load in the classroom is equivalent to 38.33% of the value of the ECTS credit in hours. The rest is allocated to the students' personal work and study
Distribution of sessions	Plenary sessions account for 50% of the students' teaching load. practical sessions 20%; group work 17%; seminar lectures 9%, and monitoring group tutorials 4%.
Types of groups	Plenary sessions: the entire class. Practical sessions: subgroups of 50%. Group work sessions: groups of 5. Seminar lectures: subgroups of 25%. Group monitoring tutorial sessions: subgroups of 25%.
Example	4 ECTS credits = 120 study hours > Teaching load hours = 46. 23 plenary hours, 9 hours of practical sessions, 8 hours of group work, 4 hours of seminar and 2 hours of monitoring tutorials.

N.B. In plenary sessions, the basic concepts of each bloc of content are set out, with a very applied focus. Practical sessions take place in the computer room, and are used to carry out practical exercises on the computer with a specific program. Teamwork sessions are focused on resolving specific cases. Seminar lectures take place twice a term and their objective is to debate and orally present the cases covered by the teamwork. The results of the exercises carried out in practical sessions, etc. are discussed in tutorial/monitoring sessions.

* This organisation covers the combined methodologies. As shown, the distribution of the sessions and the various groups is adapted to the needs of the subject, which makes it possible to meet the objectives and achieve the desired competences that are to be covered in the subject concerned.

3.5. Problem-based learning

Combines:

1. Double level groups:
 - Groups of 25-30 students (3 subgroups).
 - Teams of 5-6 students (the team choose a spokesperson and a secretary).

 2. One group includes 5 to 6 teams:
 - 2 hours weekly in a large group in order to present the results of the work and lead to debate and conclusions.
 - 1 tutorial hour weekly for teams, attended by tutors, to present the problem or activity to be covered during the week, formulate the learning objectives and design the strategy for acquiring the necessary knowledge.

 3. Activities to be carried out:
 - Resolution of practical cases.
 - Visits to external bodies, centres or institutions.
 - Internet searches.
 - Simulations.

 4. There is no single lecturer but instead a “teaching team” consisting of two lecturers and the tutors heading each team.

 5. It is important to have good material, consisting of:
 - A good manual.
 - Short monographic articles for each session.
 - Information material: press, documentation on the Internet...
 - Material classified beforehand: databases.
 - Online material.
 - Online self-evaluation exercises.
 - Debating forum (useful for contextualising learning).
 - Video clips for introducing a subject.
-

N.B. This organisational approach is an exclusive example of problem-based learning methodology, and is suitable for subjects that make this possible. The high proportion of autonomous work done by the student should be borne in mind, and as such it is recommended for advanced courses or students and lecturers that have received the appropriate training.

3.6. Criteria that must be considered.

Questions to be considered

When rethinking courses or a subject based on the requirements of the EHEA and deciding on the two key aspects – the teaching percentage and type of groups - depending on whether they are undergraduate or postgraduate courses, some criteria must be taken into account.

1. **The academic year:** teaching first year students is not the same as teaching third and fourth year students. First year students need more presence from the lecturer and a much more thorough monitoring of the process and activity. As they progress through the years, they should become used to a different way of studying that is more autonomous, and participate in seminars and become involved in workshops to a greater extent. In short, “learning by doing”.
2. Which **competences** and **content** are involved in the course or subject? Which way of covering them is most appropriate?
3. Which **teaching methodologies** are to be used during the term?
4. What **type of activities** are to be covered and what type of groups are most feasible for covering them?
5. The **material** which is available and which has to be created for scratch **for work inside and outside the classroom:** cases, hypotheses, articles, reading guides,...
6. Uses that can be made of the ICTs: subject websites? Can documentation be made available to students virtually? Can activities be made more useful using the virtual classroom so that the students work there before coming to class? Is it possible to create subject blogs? Will virtual tutorials take place? Deepening or support activities can be proposed on the website for students who need them in the subject, self-evaluation activities, etc.

In many cases, first year students come to university thinking that their main tasks will be to attend class, take notes, and memorise. They must be shown that this is not enough in the education of a university student.

4. The teaching plan





The teaching plan is the document that includes, arranges and sets out all the items in a subject, in terms of methodology and the organisation of teaching.

The teaching plan is the guiding document or the road map for teaching a subject.

As a result, it must be a useful tool for both teachers and students. The lecturer must use it to redesign the subject based on the new requirements and above all, to plan thoroughly how it will be implemented during the term. It is very useful in subjects with several lecturers, who are responsible for various content (lectures, seminars, laboratories), because it improves co-ordination of teaching.

It must ensure that it contains at least the competences that are to be covered; the content; the schedule of weekly activities as regards the plenary sessions and those carried out in small groups and the activities that students have to do outside the classroom; the evaluation mechanisms and finally, the bibliographical and digital resources required. All information on evaluation should be specified in depth: how the students can pass the subject, what they have to do, how they will be evaluated, and based on what criteria.

The teaching plan should enable the student to know at the outset how the subject will work, what will be done in it and what it can be used for, so that they can have some guidance throughout the course on what they should be doing and how. Bearing in mind that students should become more autonomous during their training process, they must have the tools and resources to facilitate this. These must enable them to understand the working process so that they can organise and plan their studies and presence in the classroom themselves.

In short, therefore, **a good teaching plan** - which **does not necessarily mean a very long one** - is an extremely useful tool for planning a subject, for both the teaching staff and students. Despite involving a significant initial effort on the part of the lecturer, good organisation saves time during the term, as what takes place in each session is planned, and at the same time, another very important factor is: transparency and clarity, as all the rules of the game (evaluation criteria, handing in activities, etc.) are made clear from the outset and are explicit and transparent for everyone.

The teaching plan replaces the subject's content programme, and goes further.

The teaching plan must have four basic functions:

- 1.** Planning of learning
- 2.** Design and updating of the subject
- 3.** Information on the subject
- 4.** A "contract" between students and teaching staff

5. The authorisation and validation process for the new organisation of a subject





Based on the methodological requirements considered and their implications for organising teaching, the proposal is that teaching staff decide on the methodological and organisational approach that they feel is most appropriate for the needs of the subject.

In order to implement this decision-making and endow it with a feasible organisational framework, the following steps are proposed:

- 1. The head lecturer of a subject**, after becoming familiar with the principles for updating education promoted by the EHEA, **reconsiders the subject** and designs it, **using the teaching plan document** (with the teaching team involved on the course). * When deciding how they are going to organise their subject, the teachers **must also take the other subjects that the students are taking at the same time into account**, in the same term and academic year.
- 2. This teaching plan**, which contains the justification and planning of the organisational and methodological development of the subject, **is presented to the dean's office or the appropriate department office** for the feasibility of the proposal to be evaluated.
- 3. The dean's office or department office evaluates the feasibility of the proposal**, under the terms that it deems appropriate: first, the orientation to the training and competence profile of the graduate must be taken into account, as well as other aspects: for example, financial and infrastructure aspects, etc. The application of the proposal is authorised if necessary, and the subject is implemented.
- 4. The CQUID**, the body responsible for teaching quality, evaluates the results based on criteria which are transparent and known to all parties from the beginning of the process.
- 5. The proposal is validated** or notification is provided of the changes that are needed to adapt it to the requirements of the EHEA.

APPENDIX: Characteristics of the methodological approaches

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH	THE STRUCTURE INVOLVED	TYPE AND OBJECTIVES
PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lectures. - Seminars in adult groups. - Tutorials. - A great deal of work outside the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application of learning. <p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To acquire knowledge. - To acquire skills. - To integrate knowledge. - Justification. - To relate and reflect.
PROJECT-BASED LEARNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are almost no lectures. - Monitoring tutorial groups. - Students do a great deal of work in teams and individually outside the classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application of learning. <p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To acquire knowledge. - To develop working methodologies. - To integrate knowledge. - To relate and reflect as a team.
CASE METHOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lectures. - Seminars and/or monographic seminars. - Individual or group tutorials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Application of learning. <p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To analyse. - To argue. - To look for solutions and alternatives. - To identify problems. - To interpret. - To take decisions.

WHO APPLIES IT	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The University of Maastricht uses it as the only method in the entire university. - It has a long-standing tradition in medicine and the health sciences. 	<p>The students' learning is very effective and very focused.</p> <p>Students acquire a great deal of responsibility for their own learning.</p>	<p>Does not work for mathematics subjects or those involving them.</p> <p>Students must have some degree on autonomy in their learning; that is why it is more suitable for more advanced courses.</p>
<p>It is common in engineering and all subjects in various degree courses that allow cross-disciplinary projects to be undertaken during the course. Examples include Economics, Business Administration and Management, Advertising and PR, and Journalism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It also has a long-standing tradition in the teaching of second modern languages in university environments. 	<p>Students learn in a very self-managed way; that is why they learn to develop a great deal of working methodology. They choose the subject for their project, which is why motivation is high. They integrate the knowledge within the framework of a real project.</p>	<p>The evaluation and tutoring process must be thorough, and cover both the content and the process.</p> <p>It is suitable in subjects where it is possible to produce a project that includes all the contents.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Harvard/Dutch universities (a great deal of work is done in seminars). - Law and psychology courses, etc. - Translation and interpretation courses. 	<p>Learning in terms of competences is very high.</p> <p>It is very effective for applying learning and analysing facts.</p>	<p>Cases must be prepared in order to extract the best possible results from them. If undertaken in plenary sessions, with small groups of students in the same classroom, sessions should not involve more than 60 students.</p>

APPENDIX: Characteristics of the methodological approaches

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH	THE STRUCTURE INVOLVED	TYPE AND OBJECTIVES
CO-OPERATIVE LEARNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seminars and tutorials in small groups. - There are almost no lectures. - A great deal of work outside the classroom. 	<p>Construction of knowledge and acquisition of skills.</p> <p>OBJECTIVES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Management. - Agreement. - Decision-making. - Integrating knowledge. - Production.
COMBINED FORMULAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lectures - Small groups (such as seminars, group tutorials, etc.). 	<p>Construction of knowledge, acquisition of competences, application of learning. In short, everything is possible for active learning by the students.</p>

WHO APPLIES IT	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Universities with a technical tradition for engineers, architects, telecommunications, etc. They often combine it with PBL. - It can be applied in many courses. - A long tradition in North American colleges. - Influential in learning modern languages. 	<p>Learning of competences is usually highly relevant. Students satisfaction levels are usually high because of the shared construction of knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An interdisciplinary approach which often contrasts with separation between with subjects. <p>Not all the activities are suitable for teamwork, and it is necessary to ensure that the working process is really co-operative. It involves management of the working process by both the students and the lecturer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires prior training of the students for teamwork. 	<p>Does not work for mathematics subjects or subjects containing them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students must have some degree of autonomy in their learning; that is why it is more suitable for more advanced courses.
<p>In practically all universities. It has some tradition in Dutch universities.</p>	<p>It enables different methods and techniques to be used and combined depending on the objectives to be achieved and the activities to be carried out.</p>	<p>If all the subjects in a faculty or on a course use combined formulas, it can be difficult to manage (groups, infrastructures, etc.).</p>

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