

Analysis and good practices of the university guidance system for students with disabilities

Análisis y buenas prácticas del sistema de orientación universitaria para estudiantes con discapacidad

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Abstract:

In order to achieve real inclusion and participation of all the members of the university community, it is necessary to promote actions based on respect and recognition of rights. In this process, guidance for university students with disabilities has become particularly important. This study, within the framework of the project “Analysis of institutional and informal support and guidance systems for university students” (funded by the Castilla y León Regional Department for Education), focuses on describing and analysing the adequacy of support and guidance services for students with disabilities in Spanish public uni-

versities, by identifying good practices. The method used is based on documentary analysis and content analysis of the actions and services providing support and guidance for students with disabilities included in the verification reports on university degrees and the websites of the 47 Spanish public universities. For the data analysis, a system of categories was established using the MAXQDA program. The results were differentiated according to the designation, scope of action, objectives, procedures, recipients, stage of studies and specific actions regarding disability. The results show that all the universities analysed have support services for these students at the

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centre of guidance organisation and management. The main good practices of note involve the network of agents that this process co-ordinates, including foundations, companies and institutions, as well as the plans, projects and/or programmes that encourage participation and that are adapted to the needs or difficulties that this group may encounter, especially those related to volunteering and adjustments.

Keywords: guidance, disability, university, counselling services, higher education.

Resumen:

Para poder conseguir la inclusión real y la participación de todos los miembros de la comunidad universitaria es necesario fomentar acciones de respeto y reconocimiento de derechos. En este proceso, ha cobrado especial importancia la orientación a los estudiantes universitarios con discapacidad. Este estudio, enmarcado en el proyecto «Análisis de los sistemas de apoyo y orientación institucionales e informales para estudiantes universitarios» (financiado por la Consejería de Educación de Castilla y León) se centra en describir y analizar la adecuación de los servicios de apoyo y orientación a los estudiantes con discapacidad en las universidades públicas españolas, iden-

tificando buenas prácticas. El método seguido se fundamenta en el análisis documental y análisis de contenido sobre las actuaciones y los servicios de apoyo y orientación a estudiantes con discapacidad incluidos en las memorias de verificación de títulos universitarios y de las webs instituciones de las 47 universidades públicas españolas. Para el análisis de los datos se ha establecido un sistema de categorías en el programa MAXQDA. Los resultados se han diferenciado en función de la denominación, ámbito de actuación, objetivos, procedimiento, destinatarios, momento de los estudios y actuaciones específicas en discapacidad. Los resultados reflejan que todas las universidades analizadas cuentan con servicios de atención a estos estudiantes como centro de organización y gestión de la orientación. Como principales buenas prácticas destaca la red de agentes coordinados en este proceso, incluyendo fundaciones, empresas e instituciones; así como los planes, proyectos y/o programas que fomentan la participación y que se ajustan a las necesidades o dificultades que puedan surgir a este colectivo, especialmente las relativas al voluntariado y las adaptaciones.

Descriptor: orientación, discapacidad, universidad, servicios de orientación, educación superior.

1. Introduction

This study is part of the project funded by the Castilla y León Regional Department for Education “Análisis de los sistemas de apoyo y orientación institucionales e informales para estudiantes universitarios” (*Analysis of institutional and informal*

support and guidance systems for university students) (2019-21) by the Grupo ÉVORI (Evaluación, Orientación y Políticas Educativas) (*Educational Evaluation, Guidance and Policies*) at the Universidad de León. This project and study both focus on the guidance and counselling process,

whose main aim is to provide a response and offer help in the numerous situations that a person may encounter during their development in different areas of life. The concept of guidance arose as a consequence of a socio-economic need related to the professional sphere (Amor Almedina & Dios Sánchez, 2017; Pantoja-Vallejo et al., 2020; Pérez & Serra, 2016), later being reshaped under a more general, global perspective, thereby making guidance a key element in modern society, particularly as regards academic guidance and counselling (Amor Almedina & Dios Sánchez, 2017; Pantoja-Vallejo et al., 2020). Guidance is now defined as process of continuous assessment and assistance to all people, in all their aspects, with the objective of strengthening human development throughout a person's life (Amor Almedina, 2020; Pérez & Serra, 2016).

Guaranteeing high-quality education and accommodating the diversity of all the students is one of the most difficult challenges faced by education, including at university level. Efforts to safeguard the principle of equal opportunities in higher education have increased considerably in a visible way, especially as far as students with disabilities are concerned (Álvarez, 2016; Novo-Corti et al., 2015) and this is expressed in the Preamble to Organic Law 4/2007, of 12 April, amending Organic Law 6/2001, of 21 December, on Universities (LOMLOU). To this effect, guidance is considered to be a tool with which to facilitate and implement actions to encourage the inclusion of students, while at the same time improving their academic and personal achievements (Lorenzo et al.,

2017). The current model includes the creation of specific support services designed as a mechanism that offers a holistic approach to the student with a disability (Álvarez Pérez, 2016), thereby responding to the Spanish University Student Statute (article 65.3). In this model, universities have made a great effort to meet the needs of students with disabilities, adopting a series of measures within the guidance and support system, such as pre-university guidance, prior assessment of needs in order to create an individual action plan, information campaigns among the university community regarding disability, and the coordination of internal and external services (Ferreira Villa et al., 2014a).

To boost success at university for students with disabilities, the necessary adjustments and modifications to the curriculum need to be put into practice (Núñez, 2017; Rodríguez Martín et al., 2014), as well as new methodologies, adaptation of resources, processes concerning tutorial activity, and the search for evaluation strategies that are in keeping with individualisation. Guidance and counselling are an essential process for personalisation in teaching (Martínez Clares et al., 2019) and to create a common European system that is more competitive and of higher quality. Orientation and mentoring become essential and relevant processes for personalized teaching, which requires identification of student's tutoring needs for implementation. This study aims to increase the knowledge of mentoring and student needs through the design and validation of an ad hoc questionnaire, applied to 572 students in the second, third

and fourth year of the different Degrees in Educational Sciences. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis shows the validity of the five-dimensional structural model around which the tutorial content must revolve (adaptation to context, personal identity, integration, teaching-learning and professional development and the support services or university programmes aimed at these students can contribute to this. These services are in place in European universities to ensure the principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination (Galán-Mañas, 2015). However, it is necessary to establish and mainstream standards of quality and indicators of good practices in running these services for students with disabilities (Álvarez Pérez, 2016). According to data provided by Fundación Universia, most Spanish universities offer some type of support and care service to students with disabilities, whether through specific programmes or services, or by adaptations to university access and the students' stay there (Cotán, 2017). These services have been in operation for several years but only some of them show evidence of having thoroughly and systematically analysed the inclusion of these students. Their courses of action focus on informing, guiding and managing the needs of students with disabilities, intervening on an individual or group level, and they are aimed at promotion, welcoming, permanence and graduation (Galán-Mañas, 2015).

The information and guidance provided by these services is one of the cornerstones for students with disabilities so that they

can become fully integrated into university, as are teacher training and information in order to foster a more suitable approach to their needs (Moriña, 2015) and to eliminate any negative attitudes (Álvarez Pérez, 2016; Arias et al., 2016; Novo-Corti et al., 2015; Rodríguez Martín et al., 2014). To assist in this support process, it is recommended that there be a figure or educational agent who acts as a link between students with disabilities and the relevant teachers involved, so that they can assume the task of addressing the needs detected and ensuring that information reaches the students, thereby easing the inclusion process (Moriña et al., 2014).

Guidance and counselling services for these students should be based on prior analysis and diagnosis, so that careful consideration can be given to university education and assessment by all the professionals involved. Specifically, the main activities of these services should be based on: co-ordination; guidance on choosing university courses; student welcome protocol; planning of support and assessment; information, support and training for teachers; awareness-raising regarding disabilities by all the agents involved in the education system; preparation for the transition to a working life (González et al., 2017).

In accordance with the above, this study analyses the support and care for students with disabilities in Spanish public universities, by identifying good practices. It is based on the premise that the adaptation of this support should endorse the social dimension of the European Higher

Education Area (EHEA) (Rodríguez Martín et al., 2014), remedy the shortcomings of social policies, improve the quality of education and the accomplishments of the entire university community (Ferreira et al., 2014b; Galán-Mañas, 2015), by enabling the comprehensive development of all students and establishing a conception that involves the student population as a whole (Amor Almedina, 2020) and all their stages of transition (González-Moreira et al., 2021).

2. Objectives

The objective of this study is to describe and analyse the support and guidance for students with disabilities in Spanish public universities, by identifying good practices. To achieve this objective, we will analyse (1) the approaches to support and guidance systems included in the design of new university degree courses, (2) the actions organised by the support and guidance services that are available to students with disabilities through the university websites, and (3) good practices in support and guidance for these students.

3. Method

3.1. Design

The methodology used in this study is documentary analysis based on content analysis. This analysis is planned and systematic and enables us to analyse and gain in-depth knowledge of the social phenomenon under study, using the main documentary sources of data as a basis (Rapley, 2014). The methodology was applied by

means of specific computing procedures that allow for and facilitate the collection and management of a large amount of data, whilst extracting the key information. This procedure enhances the validity of the results and their significance for decision-making.

3.2. Sample

The objective of this study is, specifically, the analysis of the support and guidance systems for students with disabilities in Spanish public universities from two perspectives: the design of university degree courses and the actions of the university guidance and counselling services. In keeping with the design outlined in the research, the documents selected for this study are a reliable, practical and relevant source (Bisquerra, 2009). In selecting both the population of degree courses and the institutional websites, we have used the Registro de Universidades, Centros y Títulos (Register of Universities, Centres and Qualifications) (RUCT) at the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities. This study focuses on the 47 Spanish public universities, rejecting university subsidiaries and authorised foreign educational centres ($n = 6$), online centres ($n = 1$) and those that do not offer Bachelor's degree courses ($n = 2$) in order to improve the homogeneity of the results and their usefulness in decision-taking.

On one hand, in the analysis of the approaches to support and guidance systems included in the design of new university degrees, we will analyse the verification reports for the degree courses in the sam-

ple. In creating this sample of degrees, we have chosen Bachelor's degree courses offered at the universities analysed, in all fields of knowledge, that have been published in the B.O.E. (*Spanish Official State Gazette*) and are currently officially registered. The justification for the choice of Bachelor's degree courses was determined by the fact that these courses offer a more homogeneous view than master's degree courses, which differ in their institutional responsibilities, student profile and curricular design. This search resulted in 2,024 single honours Bachelor's degrees (42 joint honours degrees were eliminated). For the final sample selection, we calculated the distribution of the population of Bachelor's degrees with the combination of university/field of knowledge and we also calculated the number of degrees needed in the sample for each cluster, by analysing 412 qualifications (for an error of $\pm 5\%$ ($p = q = 0.5$), the sample should contain 323 degrees according to the standard procedure for finite populations). Finally, it was decided that the sample should represent all the clusters, and in accordance with the criterion of maximum diversity in the types of degrees, the final sample contains 380 degree courses.

On the other hand, for the analysis of the actions organised by the support and guidance services for students with disabilities, the data collection source was the 47 institutional websites whose URL addresses are registered with the RUCT, the main source for access to information for the students themselves (Fundación Universia, 2020). To locate the specific sources

of information at each university, we conducted a search using a loop procedure beginning on each university's main website, which was limited to specific sections regarding the disability support services and units.

3.3. Collection and data analysis

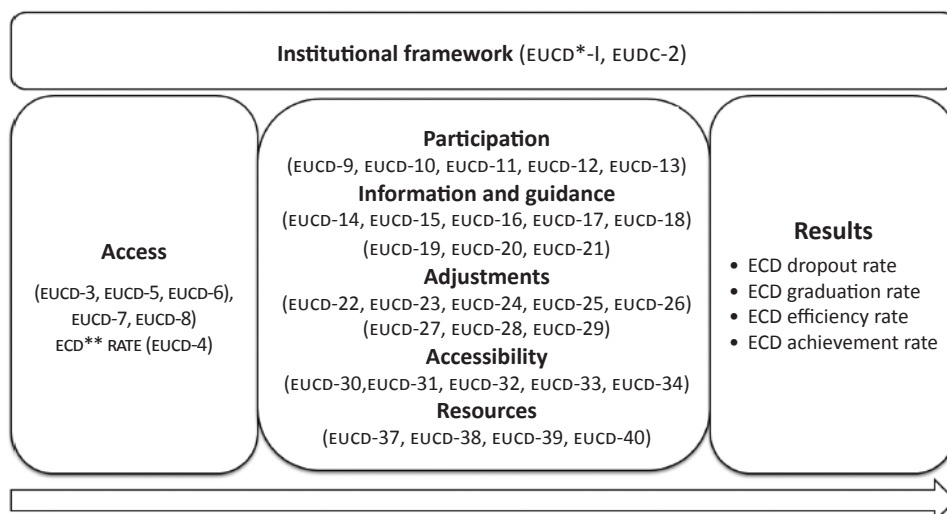
Data collection and analysis was conducted using the program MAXQDA Analytics Pro 2020 (20.2.2). This software enables the automatic and manual categorisation of open texts, the creation of category systems for analysis and the building of explanatory models. The documents and information from the websites analysed were collected using the *Web Collector* extension for this software, which captures and digitises webpages in PDF format.

In the content analysis of both the verification reports and the websites, categories (codes) were created and assigned to specific segments of information in the documents selected. This analysis, based on thematic coding, allows the data to be organised and categories in a way that they can be interpreted and given a meaning (Wood and Smith, 2018). The process of categorising the segments consists of a cyclical, inductive approach, which is based on the development of an organisation system using the information, whereby data that are comprehensible by themselves and that correspond to key ideas in the study are fragmented. This process enables us to respond to the question outlined, as well as linking data collection to data analysis (Flick, 2015). In line with Schreier (2012), we used two types of categorisation strategies. Firstly, we designed

categorisation strategies using the concept as a basis, that is to say, deductive strategies based on the system of indicators to evaluate support and care for university students with disabilities (Ferreira et al., 2014b). This system is composed of 40 indicators and eight areas that were identified

within the process of guidance and support for these students, which relate to the subcodes established in this study: institutional framework, access, participation, information and guidance, adjustments, accessibility, resources and results (Graph 1).

GRAPH 1. System of indicators to evaluate support and care for university students with disabilities.



* EUCD (Estudiantes universitarios con discapacidad) = USWD (University students with disabilities).

** ECD (Estudiantes con discapacidad) = SWD (Students with disabilities).

Source: Ferreira et al., 2014b.

In the case of the websites, we also used the general description of the actions organised by the disability support and care units: designation, scope of action, objectives, procedures, recipients and stage of studies. Secondly, using these categories as a basis, we subsequently designed categorisation strategies that were determined from data for the inductive strategies. The coding system emerged as a hierarchical system built on the iterative process of several cycles used in the study.

4. Results

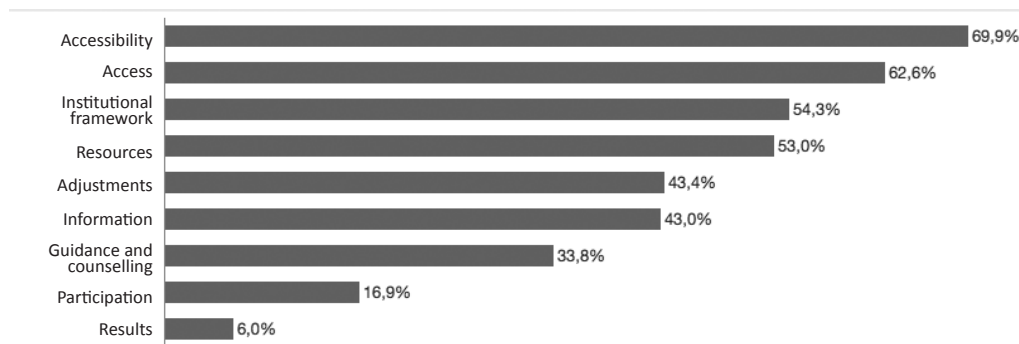
4.1. Approaches to support and guidance systems in the design of new university degrees

The results obtained by analysing the approaches to support and guidance systems using the verification reports reveal that the two most-mentioned aspects in degree course design are those relating to accessibility and access (Graph 2). The reports mention accessibility primarily in

connection with the actions which will be organised in order to meet student needs in the academic and pedagogical spheres, in terms of mobility and access to communication. As for access for students with

disabilities, it should be noted that this is the aspect for which study planning establishes the most guidelines to assist these students, emphasising the importance of their transition to university education.

GRAPH 2. Presence of the indicators related to disability in the verification reports of the Bachelor's degree courses analysed.



Regarding the institutional framework, the reports mention regulations on disability, principally at national level, among which are the following:

- Royal Decree 1791/2010, of 30 December, which approves the University Student Statute.
- Royal Decree 2271/2004, which regulates access to public employment and the provision of jobs for people with disabilities.
- Royal Decree 1414/2006, of 1 December, which states the consideration of persons with disabilities, for the purposes of Law 51/2003, of 2 December, on Equal opportunities, non-discrimination and universal accessibility of persons with disabilities.

- Royal Decree 505/2007, of 20 April, which establishes the basic conditions of accessibility and non-discrimination of persons with disabilities when using and accessing urban public spaces and buildings.

As for the resources analysed, on one hand human resources are reported, with specific staff to implement guidance and assessment mechanisms for people with disabilities and their families. As part of these resources, universities such as the UMA refer to student collaborators who provide study support. On the other hand, material resources are specified, which enable access to new technologies with computing equipment and technical resources adapted for curricular access (voice recorders, carbonless notebooks, FM systems, among others), adaptation

of classroom equipment and material provided during classes (notes and hands-on activities). In some cases, mention is also made of assistance in the form of economic resources at an individual level relating to transport. Lastly, social resources are far less common (UGR, UJA, UPV), such as assessment regarding accommodation or acting as a link with all the institutions and non-governmental organisations that collaborate with the university (for example, ONCE, FAAS, CANF-COCEMFE).

Adjustments specified in the reports concern issues at a structural level, assessment or access to the curriculum. At times, these adjustments are introduced to provide access to information, mainly focusing on the initial stage of university as regards the enrolment process or curricular adjustments. Along the lines of the other items analysed, guidance and counselling primarily concentrates on the moment of access and, again, on academic and institutional aspects.

The two items that were least present in the verification reports were, on one hand, participation (17%), which represents an approach involving low levels of student activity regarding university life and, on the other, with 6%, the data on the rates of success, failure and dropout among this population (Graph 2).

4.2. Actions by the support and guidance services at universities for students with disabilities

Details of the results of analysing the actions by the support and guidance services at universities for students with

disabilities are presented under the main codes analysed: designation, scope of action, objectives, procedures, recipients, at what stage the students are and disability. The “document code matrix” (Annex 1) provides a visualisation of the list and identification of the sources analysed by university and the codes identified (1,117 coded segments) in the system established.

4.2.1. General characteristics of the actions

The designation of the disability support and care services differs from one university to another. In some cases, they are referred to as services, and in others offices, areas or units. The terms *Disability* or *Diversity Support Services* or *Units* are prevalent in the designation. The needs and requirements of students with disabilities have been grouped under three spheres of action, considered to be the most urgent in achieving equity and equal opportunities: academic, personal and professional. Taking these three areas into account, there is a great difference between them, with the academic sphere predominating (75.4%). This area primarily covers aspects such as requirements relating to access and admission (reserved places for disabled students and exemption from public fees), different study grants for students with disabilities, teaching guides on disability support and/or care and issues concerning academic mobility (ERASMUS+ grants). The personal sphere (18.3%) includes aspects related to access to counselling and mental health for this collective, the availability of accommodation and specially adapted transport, as well as access to adapted sports at university for students with disabilities (examples

can be found at UJI, UPC, UPGC, UMA and ULE). Finally, regarding the professional sphere (6.3%), there are work placement programmes for students with disabilities, as well as external internships and employability skills, or the creation of job banks, as is the case at the UB.

The analysis of university disability support and care services also registered the objectives of these services. Generally, they focus principally on:

1. *Promoting* a quality service, by ensuring equal opportunities for students with disabilities and establishing actions aimed at eliminating any difficulties that may arise.
2. *Raising awareness* among the whole university community about the situation of people with disabilities, whilst guaranteeing their integration and participation in university life.
3. *Guiding* and *advising* students with disabilities at an individual level, providing the most suitable technical help and adjustments in each case.
4. *Training*, through different educational actions related to disability, encouraging participation and organising actions designed to eliminate difficulties.
5. Lastly, other objectives were identified, such as *diagnosing*, *informing* and *researching*, but they featured to a lesser extent.

As part of the disability services, the procedures in the guidance and counselling process offer individual and group actions. Among them it is worth mentioning, at an individual level, evaluation by guidance specialists, individual interviews with students who request specific information and actions promoting the integration of students with disabilities, such as adjustments. In turn, at a group level, actions were identified relating to accompanying students with disabilities, action programmes for the integration of people with disabilities in the university and programmes concerning support for diversity, volunteering and social involvement, as well as actions for overall awareness-raising, participation and training. It should be noted that the volunteering activities and programmes are present as group procedures at all the universities analysed.

The analysis revealed how disability support and care services were, primarily, aimed at students with disabilities or with specific special educational needs, but we also encountered actions intended for the whole university community, in coordination with the different agents that collaborate in these services. The most noteworthy are the foundations, particularly Fundación ONCE and Fundación Universia, which contribute to the promotion of the various programmes and grants which are available to the collective. There is also a network of collaboration with different institutions and associations, such as the Ministry of Health and Social Policy, the Ministry of Employment and Social Security, Ministry

of Education, Culture and Sport, the Asociación Roosevelt and the CERMI (*Spanish Committee on Representatives of People with Disabilities*) among others. We also identified collaboration by companies such as Telefónica, Repsol, La Caixa, Vodafone España and Banco Santander. Lastly, it is worth mentioning that we did not find any information on the websites regarding participation by the families of students with disabilities.

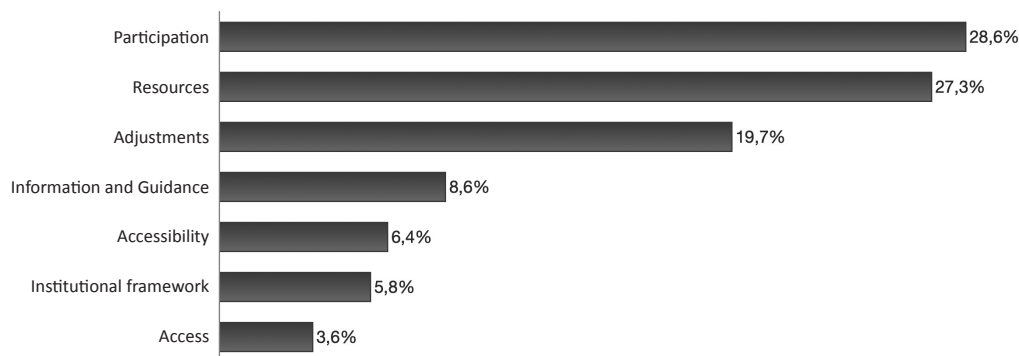
In terms of the stage of studies, we mainly found actions intended to occur before the students join university, with welcome plans and programmes, scheduled visits, meetings with ex-alumni with disabilities, open days, adjustments to university access and co-ordination with higher education centres to provide the future students with information and guidance. In the “during” period, in all the universities analysed support and assessment are also offered, although this is only implied,

if requested by a student with a disability. Finally, at the stage of finishing their studies and finding employment, there are universities that are especially noteworthy in facilitating external internships and access to grants and job banks or providing assessment during this process of entering employment (UAM, UB, UMH and UPV-EHU).

4.2.2. Specific actions in the areas of the process of disability support and guidance.

In line with the areas established by Ferreira et al. (2014b), the main specific actions organised by disability support and care services are aimed at participation (28.6%), followed by provision of resources (27.3%) and implementation of adjustments (19.7%), as well as information and guidance (8.6%), not forgetting issues of accessibility (6.4%), regulations (5.8%) and access (3.6%). No explicit data was found on information in the area of results (Graph 3).

GRAPH 3. Coded segments in the areas of the process of support and guidance for students with disabilities at university.



Within the disability support and care services, the most prominent area relates to the involvement of students in univer-

sity life and the actions that favour participation by these students in the different programmes offered by the university. This

area promotes awareness-raising, an introduction to and contact with the disabled collective through actions and activities aimed at fostering and facilitating integration, such as sessions relating to the field of disability, conferences, experiential workshops and activities on social involvement (in collaboration with foundations and associations). Within these actions, volunteer work is significant, often focusing on the figure of the student collaborator, present in all the universities, but also involving participation programmes such as student assistant programmes, collaboration grants funded by different foundations at each university, programmes regarding assistance, welcome plans and note-taking programmes. Also of importance in this point are awareness-raising campaigns, such as the UJI's project "ROMPAMOS BARRERAS" (Let's break down barriers) or Project "INCLUYE" (Include).

We can consider resources to be the assistance or means a person uses to achieve an end or satisfy a need. The analysis revealed different resources offered by the services, of a material and didactic nature (adapted computers, trackball mice, virtual keyboards and tablets; calculators, FM systems and voice recorders; electronic magnifiers; specific software; specific resources and material; action guides, plans and protocols; ZOOM and JAWS programmes; interactive whiteboards; netbooks; multimedia libraries; FM radio equipment; hearing loops or resource banks), and human (teacher/tutor, internal assistant, note-taker, specialist in specific educational support needs, sign language interpreter, volunteer, counsellor,

student collaborator, psychiatrist, doctor, psychologist, apprentice collaborator or personal assistant).

As regards education, adjustments relate to types of educational strategies, particularly aimed at students with special educational needs, so that the most suitable response can be provided to the needs that arise, by modifying different aspects or situations that influence learning development. In most cases, the adjustments and resources are connected to each other. One of the adjustments present at most of the universities involves measures for extended time and adaptations in exams (including admissions tests), using resources such as accessible Microsoft, braille, magnified text and ZoomText, alternative formats, time extensions, adapted seats or oral exams using a sign language interpreter. Adjustments were also identified in different sports activities offered by the universities (UJI, UMA, UPGC).

The category of information and guidance is mainly related to curricular aspects. In this category, we identified Inclusion Plans, the Diversity Support Plan, Welcome Plans, the Tutorial Action Plan and specific educational guidance. Considering information and guidance as an additional way to promote accessibility to information and contents leads to the organisation of open, informative sessions, guides on diversity support, resources, teachers and adjustments, and also action protocols. Furthermore, different universities provide training courses and foster teacher training in the field of inclusion and diversity.

Accessibility refers to aspects linked to the possibility of using any object, place or access to a service. In this framework, we found that all the universities present aspects related to the elimination and suppression of physical barriers through plans and projects to this purpose. Some measures that are available to students with disabilities are the loan of lift keys, reserving places both in the classroom and other rooms, access ramps, reserved parking spaces and transport, adapted toilet and washing facilities, individual service in libraries and catering, among others. Accommodation programmes are also offered to students with disabilities (UAM and USC) and reserved parking spaces (UGR). Additionally, specific software is available on loan to promote internet accessibility and support in the laboratories and sessions that are held in the computing classrooms (UNIRI-OJA). Likewise, support is provided for movement around the campus (using figures such as the collaborator or volunteer) (UJI) and adapted sports facilities are available on campus (UPC).

As regards the institutional framework, in relation to the framework of rights to assist university students with disabilities, different regulations identified on the websites of these services were consistent with those indicated in the verification reports.

Lastly, relating to access, we identified the factors that, to some extent, are influential when students begin their university studies. The most coded seg-

ment refers to the reservation of 5% of the places available on each degree course and at each centre for those students with disabilities have a 33% degree of disability. Another of the measures established corresponds to the exemption from paying the enrolment fee for these students. As specific actions, we identified individual support and educational guidance for students at the stages of pre-enrolment and enrolment (UMH) or providing accommodation adapted to their needs (UAM). At this point, it is also important to emphasise the establishment of specific adjustments to university admissions tests.

4.3. Good practices in support and guidance for students with disabilities

With the information analysed, from both the reports and the websites, it is possible to offer general guidelines on good practices in support and care for this collective, remedying the shortcomings and needs detected. Specifically, focusing on the following aspects:

Preparation: linked to actions prior to joining university and the initial welcome at the university centres.

- A plan for transition to university with a clear definition of the stages of assistance for students with additional support for their families, initiated previously in secondary education and the admissions tests, establishing relations involving co-ordination with guidance and counselling services in secondary education in order to become acquainted with the students with disabilities

who are going to join the university and to plan the necessary support sufficiently in advance.

- The existence of welcome sessions where students have access to other people's experiences and where they can build relationships and clarify doubts among peers with different experiences.

Adjustment: caring for the process of assisting and guiding students with disabilities in the different areas of their comprehensive training.

- Preparation of adjustments that allow for good, personalised study planning and design to adapt to each student's needs, employing all the accessible resources that the student can normally use and that are effective for their academic, personal and professional growth.
- Support and care in the cultural, sporting and social sphere that is available at the university and managed by the institution itself, putting these students in touch with the student associations or university outreach services that will allow them to engage in active participation.
- Conducting individual interviews as part of the access protocol with each of the students, thereby easing the process of transition to university.

Co-ordination: team work is essential, involving all the agents who participate in the process of guiding these students.

- Co-ordination and collaboration are required between the tutor, counsellor, teacher or all those agents engaged in the students' academic, personal and professional development, in order to achieve real inclusion, providing suitable assistance for these students' needs.
- The preparation of complete plans, with specific, viable ideas and proposals for each university, according to the conditions there, that consider accompanying the student throughout their studies and include recommendations on entering the labour market through all types of companies in the relevant sector.

Awareness-raising: visualising and normalising disabilities is fundamental in ensuring awareness among the entire university community, thereby encouraging participation to achieve real and effective integration.

- Outreach and awareness in the university community concerning the social and work problems faced by people with disabilities, combined with overcoming possible stereotypes among the students with disabilities themselves.

Evaluation: it is important to consider whether the mechanisms available to these students are working, as this is the only way they can be improved and adapted to the needs that may arise.

- Listening actively to students is a key part of this process of continuous improvement. Direct support and care

services for students with these characteristics should provide spaces and measures which enable them to express doubts and needs, and where suggestions can be made so that a quality service can be provided, through actively listening to the university population's requirements.

- The specific data on the rates of success, dropout and satisfaction among these students is central to ascertaining whether the ultimate goal is being achieved, which is the reason for all these types of measures: success in training students with disabilities in all aspects.

5. Discussion and conclusions

This study reveals that there is now a model of specific support services for students with disabilities in place, as established by the regulations since 2010. From the data analysed, it can be deduced that there are disability support and care services or units in all the Spanish public universities studied, independently of the variety of terms used to designate them. This leads to the conclusion that university students with disabilities will find support within the institution, whether this is at an individual level or as a group (Red SAPDU, 2017) (*Network of Services for Persons with Disabilities in Universities*). Nevertheless, the tendency is moving towards the promotion of comprehensive guidance and counselling services at university intended for all the members of the university community, without forgetting the need for a specific area that

covers the needs of students with disabilities (Álvarez Pérez, 2016). This thereby combines the work performed so far with the specialisation of the existing experts, resources and actions involved with this collective. This ideal scenario, in which there is a general framework of guidance and its specialisation, would provide greater meaning to the concept of inclusion and normalisation (Farriols Hernando et al., 2014).

This study enables the support and guidance for students with disabilities to be described. It appears to confirm the universities' intention of achieving real, effective inclusion but it represents a challenge for institutions and teachers that derives from the influence of different factors on the guidance and counselling process (lack of resources, instruments, attitudes, services, legislation, participation by the educational community and the different agents, etc.). The results obtained in this work reinforce the arguments presented by Álvarez (2016), which insist on guaranteeing quality education in terms of equality and with a focus on diversity, objectives established by the different services identified in the universities. Furthermore, different dimensions can be observed within the process of guidance and counselling, which correspond to the spheres of action: professional, personal and academic. Particular significance is attached to the consideration of academic content, as well as to cognitive issues (including values, regulations and attitudes), thereby achieving the students' overall development and well-being (Álvarez Pérez, 2016; Amor

Almedina & Dios Sánchez, 2017; Martín Romera et al., 2020). The personal sphere also affects the other dimensions, as a healthy lifestyle at a psychosocial level has an effect on all the other areas, including the academic and professional spheres (Farriols Hernando et al., 2014; Martínez Clares et al., 2019). Research in recent years has indicated the additional need to contemplate guidance and counselling in social aspects (Escolano-Pérez et al., 2019; Pereira González et al., 2019; Red SAPDU, 2017) and for actions targeting student well-being (Ferreira, 2021).

As a contribution to the descriptive analysis conducted, and after detecting possible improvements in some aspects of disability guidance and counselling, we have indicated good practices regarding preparation, adjustment, co-ordination, awareness-raising and evaluation, which should be maintained or promoted in the universities that do not yet provide them. Such good practices focus on the importance of welcoming these students to the university, thereby favouring their transition and the process of assistance. To this effect, it is essential for there to be co-ordination involving all the agents, particularly teachers, as well as preparation of personalised plans, a key step in the process of guidance. It is clear that universities are making a great effort to promote participation and awareness; however, one of the good practices that should be developed is evaluation using mechanisms such as listening actively to students and collecting specific data on their time at university and their success rates.

During the data analysis, it was observed that there is a need for a more in-depth, systematic diagnosis on supporting and caring for students with disabilities in universities, as well as the introduction of inclusive actions, although it is certainly true that the necessary instruments are not always available to put this into practice. For this reason, it is absolutely necessary to implement different programmes for support, guidance and assessment in order to favour the complete and effective integration of students with disabilities, by putting the different relevant adjustments and adaptations into practice, as well as seeking new evaluation strategies (Núñez, 2017). These requirements lead to the development of an integral, comprehensive model in which interventions address the students' real and individual needs (Martínez Clares et al., 2019). For this reason, some of the suggestions offered involve the necessity of establishing new educational policies, promoting favourable attitudes to inclusion in earlier educational stages, reinforcing them with plans, projects and/or programmes that foster people's participation and awareness regarding disabilities, and that are adapted to the needs or difficulties that this collective may encounter. Therefore, and as an addition to the documentary analysis presented in this article, the research group to which we belong is currently conducting several studies. These studies analyse the actions aimed at individual support and care for students in Spanish universities in order to, subsequently, compare their impact on the teaching/learning process through interviews and questionnaires involving the

heads of the support units and services for students with disabilities, with the emphasis on the use of ICT in providing information and guidance on university access and while students are at university, as well as in addressing their personal needs.

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ANNEX 1. List of codes and sources analysed by university.

[illegible]

Note: Translation of the codes and fonts in the table in order of appearance:
Code system: DESIGNATION, SCOPE OF ACTION, Professional, Academic, Personal, OBJECTIVES, Raising awareness, Promoting, Informing, Guiding, Diagnosing, Training, Managing, Researching, PROCEDURE, Individual, Group, Face-to-face, Online, RECIPIENTS, University community, Students, Teachers, PAS (Administration and Services Staff), Faculty/Department, Society, Companies, Foundations, Families, Institutions, STAGE OF STUDIES, Prior to commencement, During, On completion, DISABILITY, Institutional framework, Access, Participation, Information and Guidance, Adjustments, Accessibility, Resources.

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