

ORIENTATION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMME

(P.R.O.A.)

The Orientation and Support Programme (PROA) includes different initiatives based on a series of core guidelines for providing assistance and ongoing encouragement for our students. Essentially, its objective is to help the students fit into the university education environment and overcome any difficulties they may have during their time here. The programme comprises two types of activities, differentiated in terms of the profiles of the target students and the point at which they find themselves in their university education:

1. Activities aimed at newly admitted students.
2. Ongoing support action (aimed at all the students in the Faculty).

1. Activities aimed at newly admitted students: The Tutoring Action Plan (TAP)

The University Tutoring Action Plan (TAP) implemented at the Faculty of Law at the UCA is rooted in the analysis of students' learning needs. Fully aware that starting a university degree course means setting out on a new phase of education which requires a rapid process of adaptation, we have created an Academic Orientation Service in the shape of a personalised tutoring system aimed especially at our first-year students. This service is currently coordinated by Dr. Teresa Gómez Prieto (TAP Coordinator).

One of the TAP's most important initiatives is the Peer Tutoring Plan, also known as "PROJECT CLASSMATE" ("PROYECTO COMPAÑERO"), in which students from later years in our degree courses are trained and offer themselves as mentors or guides, accompanying and helping their newly arrived colleagues quickly adapt to the university environment. The main objective is to endow new students with greater independence and self-sufficiency in their studies, their learning, and their life at university in general. In this regard, the Project's success will depend on the level of commitment established between the mentor student and the new arrival.

Also as part of the TAP, specialised academic tutors will be appointed on each degree course to counsel students whenever necessary, thus contributing to a global education aimed at boosting students' integral development at the intellectual, affective, personal and social levels. The help and guidance provided for students is crucial for them to be able to formulate and review their academic, professional and personal aspirations.



1.1 Freshers Welcome Day

The Freshers Welcome Day is aimed at students newly admitted to the UCA Faculty of Law's different degree courses (Bachelor's Degree in Law, Bachelor's Degree in Criminology, Double Bachelor's Degree in Law and Criminology, Double Bachelor's Degree in Law and Business Administration, and Double Bachelor's Degree in Law and Labour Relations and Human Resources). The Welcome Day takes place a few days before the start of classes. In it, the Dean, some of the vice-deans, and the coordinators of the degree courses receive the new students and provide them with key information about the Faculty and their chosen degrees. They also explain the Tutoring Action Plan and Project Classmate (how they work, how a mentor student can help, what tutoring action means, who their tutor will be, when they will meet them, etc.).

1.2. Project Classmate

This is an orientation and support activity for first-year students on the Faculty of Law's degree courses. It is conducted by "tutor-students"—volunteers from later years in each degree course. The activity takes place on the Jerez and Algeciras campuses and is coordinated by the TAP Coordinator.

Students are divided into groups and each group is assigned a mentor studying for the same degree. Each mentor, or "classmate", has to take the new arrivals round the campus (showing them the lecture rooms, the library, the copy room, the gym, the lecturers' offices, the secretary's room, etc.) and will then be on hand to help the group adapt to university life (obtain passwords to access the virtual campus, apply for their student and library cards, borrow books or computer equipment, reserve spaces for study or team work, register for student exchange programmes, and understand degree syllabus structures, the matriculation process, minimum pass rate requirements, etc.). When possible, the mentor will also provide guidance on academic or learning issues. If necessary, and if the new students require counselling or action regarding a specific issue, the mentor will inform the TAP Coordinator so that they can be assigned a specialised tutor. All this is implemented with the collaboration and participation of the University's Psycho-Pedagogical Orientation services (SAP), which are responsible for organising the training of the mentor students and processing the assignment of their corresponding ECTS credits*.

More information is available at <https://sap.uca.es/plan-de-accion-tutorial/>

1.3. Introductory Courses on Computer and Library Resources.

As part of the TAP, and in collaboration with our colleagues at the University's library, different courses are continuously being offered on the library resources of direct relevance to the students' degrees. These courses are aimed at first-year students on the bachelor's degrees and double degrees in Law and Criminology.

Two courses are open to newly arrived students: CI.1. Introduction to Library Services and Resources, and CI.2. Finding Information: The Library's Catalogue and Search Engine.

Due to the physical limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, these courses are currently available online. More information is available at <https://biblioteca.uca.es/cursos-de-formacion/#oferta>.



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The courses are advertised on the Faculty's web page, in its RSS feeds, and as part of the general information provided in different forums (The Welcoming ceremony, lecture rooms, certain subjects' virtual campuses). They are tailored to each student's individual needs by the TAP Coordinator.

* For the mentor students, participation in Project Classmate is rewarded with the recognition of 2 ECTS credits on their academic record. The assignation of these credits is processed by the SAP.

1.4. Reception Programme for Students from Other Universities.

The Faculty of Law participates in the UCA's different student mobility programmes, both at international level (the Erasmus K-103, Erasmus K-107, UCA Internacional, Swiss-European and Santander Internacional programmes), and within Spain (SICUE). As a result of the mobility agreements signed, students from other universities have full access to all our scheduled activities alongside their UCA colleagues.

A Welcome Day for all new students is also organized jointly with students from the other faculties on the Jerez campus. This welcoming event is organised with the collaboration of the Vice Chancellor for Internationalisation and the corresponding vice deans. A tutoring programme is subsequently implemented, run mainly by the Vice Dean for Student Affairs and Mobility.

2. Ongoing Support Activities

The integral training of students is a task that is not limited to the first year of a degree course. It has to be accompanied by a series of activities organised by the Faculty to increase our graduates' competitiveness by developing the basic, specific skills they need to acquire during their time with us. The courses offered by the library for new students are therefore complemented by two training courses specifically aimed at 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students: CE.1.7. Bibliographical Searches in the Legal Sciences (Law, Labour Sciences and Criminology) and CE.2.5. Westlaw-Aranzadi: Searching for Legislation and Jurisprudence. More information is available as <https://biblioteca.uca.es/cursos-de-formacion/#oferta>.

During term time, students also receive information about basic aspects of their degree courses. This includes: information sessions on student mobility programmes organised by the Vice Dean for Student Affairs and Mobility; information from the Academic Secretary about regulatory limitations affecting their registration of end-of-degree projects or external practice placements, and which may affect the duration of their studies; training sessions on how to prepare end-of-degree projects, given by the project coordinator at the Algeciras campus; and information about practice placements provided by the Practice Placement Coordinators on the Jerez and Algeciras campuses.

Finally, our Faculty has set up a debating club and a legal clinic (on both the Jerez and Algeciras campuses) as a means of furthering our students' training.



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Students are encouraged to participate in these activities, and also in the International Commercial Law and Arbitration Competition (Moot Madrid) and the International Criminal Court Moot Court Competition in The Hague.

Students of Criminology are incentivised and encouraged by their course coordinators to sign up and/or actively participate in the activities organised by the Asociación Universitaria de Criminología de Cádiz (Cadiz University Criminology Association), with which our Faculty closely collaborates.

With a view to the second quarter, the substitution of face -to-face classes by online teaching as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has led us to consider the need to offer our students a training course on virtual study techniques and ways to boost academic performance in online assessment systems.

Bibliographical Searches in the Legal Sciences (Law, Labour Sciences and Criminology)