UOC’s student profile is typically:
- 32 years old on average
- Prior university education
- Part-time or full-time job
- Family responsibilities (usually)

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT TO PROVIDE FRESHMEN WITH FLEXIBLE LEARNING PATHS AT COURSE AND SEMESTER LEVEL IN OPEN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Created by:
- Deputy dean of teaching
- Programme director
- Coordinating professor
- Mentor

What happens?
- Taking several courses with possibly overlapping schedules
- Reshaping their learning path if they cannot follow the proposed continuous assessment activities
- Assuming an excessive burden due to a wrong course election

*PAC: Continuous assessment activity

Espria
Espria + other
Non Espria
Total
N (%) N (%) N (%) N

Business administration and management
208 51,74% 131 32,59% 63 15,67% 402
Law
178 48,11% 95 25,68% 97 24,22% 370
Computer engineering
203 51,92% 129 32,99% 59 15,09% 391
Catalan language and literature
24 62,50% 5 15,15% 4 12,12% 33
Communication sciences
59 61,03% 60 42,55% 22 15,60% 141
Social education
168 77,42% 36 16,99% 13 5,99% 217
Total
840 54,05% 456 29,34% 258 16,60% 1554

Conclusions
As an ongoing project in its first stage (i.e. first cohort of students enrolling in accordance to the proposed enrolment packages of courses in each degree), ESPRIA will be fully evaluated in the following years, in order to determine its impact on freshmen, their academic performance and satisfaction, and their re-enrolment rate at their second semester. Nevertheless, several conclusions can be already drawn from this first semester of deployment. The critical factors that emerged in this phase were those related to organizational changes. For instance, some teachers were reluctant to revise course syllabus and workload as well as coordinating course schedule with other teachers, breaking the traditional “sil oily” way of designing courses at UOC.

Another important issue was training a high number of mentors and providing them with support and new tools to supervise the new enrolment process involving packages. In order to make mentors’ tasks easier, a web app with a friendly interface was developed according to their informed needs and preferences.

Preliminary results show that a large percentage of students (54.05%) chose to follow their mentors’ recommendations and finally enrolled only in specific courses / packages that were revised under the ESPRIA framework.

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