Strategic Plan
2022-2025

Universitat Oberta
de Catalunya

Strategic Plan 2022-2025

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2022 — 2025

Contents

Mission and values

Mission

The UOC is a global university and a digital native. Its mission and public duty is to provide people with lifelong learning, and as a part of this, it generates knowledge in the intersection between technology and the social and human sciences.

Values

The UOC's five key values are:

1

Commitment: to our students, our graduates and society, to high quality service, and to innovation as a mainstay of our organization.

2

Respect: for people, ideas, cultures and the world.

3

Transparency: in information, data and processes.

4

Professionalism: empowering people in our organization, acknowledging successes and learning from mistakes.

5

Sustainability: ensuring the economic, social and environmental sustainability of our organization's activities.

The UOC in 60 seconds

Reflecting its mission to prepare people for the world that they will inhabit rather than that of generations gone by, the UOC has **three hallmarks:**

The University is a pioneer and expert in online education, and delivers lifelong learning.
The UOC's priority is to respond to the changing needs of individuals and organizations alike, contributing to employability, entrepreneurship, social equality and people's ability to think critically.

The University is global and a digital native, and provides a public service.
Grounded in its social and cultural surroundings, the UOC's fully online learning model helps students develop a global perspective and digital skills, contributing to both the EU's Digital Education Action Plan and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The University focuses its research on the intersection between technology and the social and human sciences.
The UOC is committed to open knowledge, interdisciplinarity and networked cooperation, promoting research in technology and the uses of ICTs to bring transformations in education and social equality.
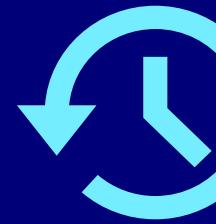
1995
The UOC was founded in 1995 as the world's first ever online university, backed by legislation introduced by the Government of Catalonia. **The goal was to let technology open the door to high quality university education for anyone, with merit as the sole criterion.**
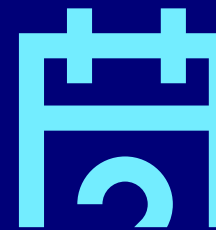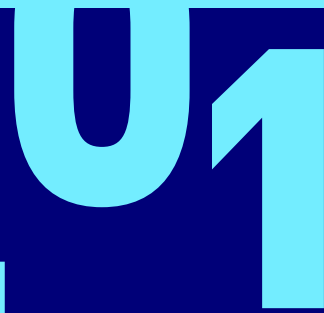
2020
Following 25 years of research and online education, the UOC's mission has been given new meaning and urgency by **advances in the knowledge society and the COVID-19 pandemic's** impact on education, work and inequalities.

Vision of the future
The UOC's vision of the future is shaped by its ambition to **transform higher education in the digital era.** This is rooted in its firm belief that universities must attain more strategic responsibility and achieve greater social impact by acting as hubs that share knowledge throughout society.

U1

A participatory process

Participation in producing the new plan

The 2022-2025 Strategic Plan was drawn up using a process that enabled everyone at the UOC to have their say. Between November 2019 and July 2020, working sessions were conducted with the University's representative bodies (the Student Council, the Alumni Council, the University Council, the UOC entrepreneurship collective and the Strategic Committee).

This deliberative and consultative participatory process was then extended to include all members of staff using the Decidim platform between April and July 2021.

16	weeks		**18,019**	pages viewed
3	debate phases • identifying future challenges • defining objectives • specifying actions to deliver the transformation		**2,720**	visits
500	active users (UOC staff)		**196**	contributions

Insights from staff

The design of the new strategic plan sought to involve members of staff as individuals, complementing the participation of their representatives or the groups of which they are members.

As a university, a knowledge-intensive institution, it made more sense than ever to take advantage of the talent of UOC employees when drawing up the new plan. The result has been a process of construction, contribution and joint reflection.

How we made it happen: Decidim

This new participatory approach was also about the internal transfer of knowledge generated at the UOC, as it made use of the Decidim platform, which was conceptualized by the Communication Networks & Social Change (CSNC) research group. This tool has been used in various initiatives generating societal impact, and in 2019 it received recognition from the European Commission at the Sharing & Reuse Awards (#SRawards2019) as one of Europe's most innovative open source projects.
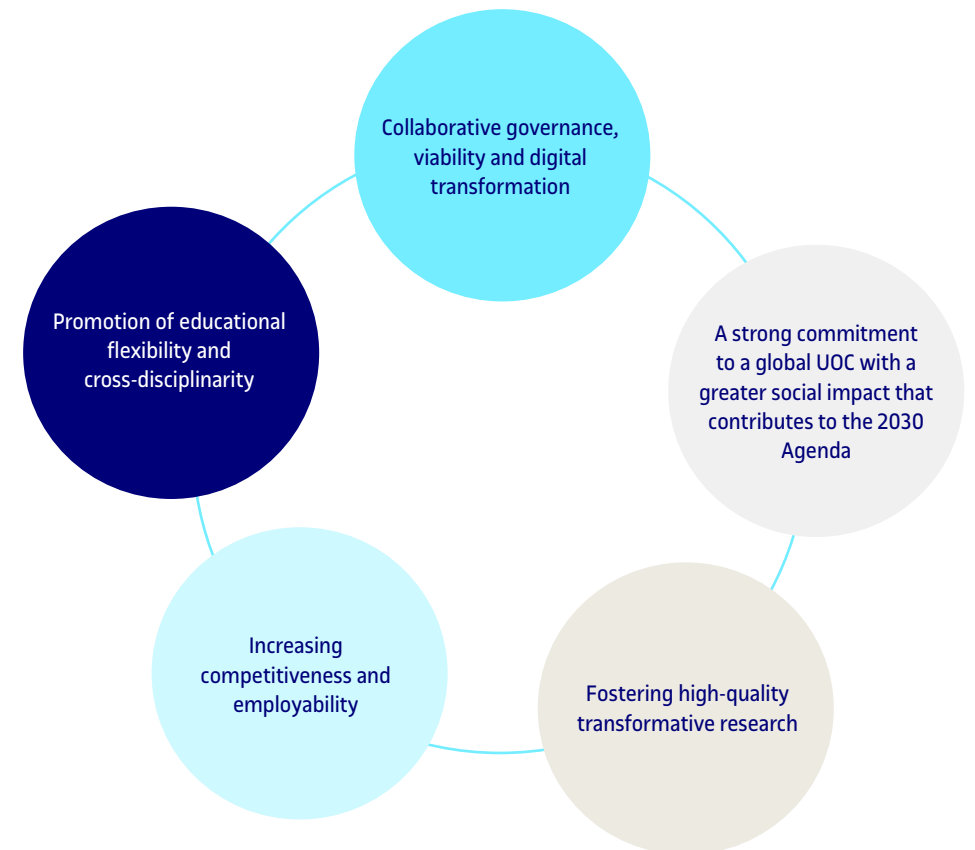
It is a new method that seeks to engage and strengthen ties among the people who make up the organization, and to generate internal, bottom-up discussions.

Working groups

Working groups have been a key factor in the process of drawing up the new Strategic Plan. Led by the vice presidents and general manager, and with support from coordinators, the groups were made up of members of the Strategic Committee, members of the University Council (academic and administrative staff), members of the Students Council and other experts representing the Alumni Council.

- Collaborative governance, viability and digital transformation
- A strong commitment to a global UOC with a greater social impact that contributes to the 2030 Agenda
- Fostering high-quality transformative research
- Increasing competitiveness and employability
- Promotion of educational flexibility and cross-disciplinarity

U2

The new Strategic Plan

The UOC's strategy from 2022 to 2025

The UOC's strategy is delivered by a continuum of strategic plans. Since the final quarter of 2019, the UOC has been immersed in designing a new strategic plan for 2022-2025, which takes over from the previous 2014-2021 plan and will be the organization's roadmap for the coming years.

Be UOC
Collaborative governance, viability and digital transformation.

Next UOC
Promotion of educational flexibility and cross-disciplinarity.

Global UOC
A strong commitment to a global UOC with more societal impact that contributes to the 2030 Agenda.

UOC Ecosystem
Increasing competitiveness and employability.

UOC Insight
Fostering transformative, high quality research.

12 challenges

33 objectives

22 plans

91 actions

12 challenges, 33 objectives

The UOC has identified 12 strategic challenges that it must face in the coming years, and these have given rise to 33 objectives.
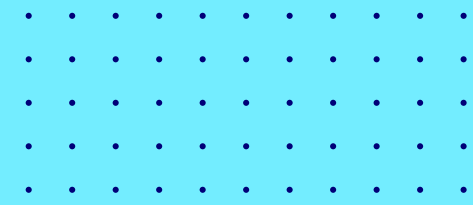
Challenge 1

Increase levels and forms of personalization for all students, with support from technology, data and AI, in order to enhance teaching quality

Objectives

Add different levels and forms of personalization to the components of the UOC educational model in ways that help students' learning and the continuous improvement of their competencies

Apply the technology and data science (collection, analysis and visualization of data) necessary for the personalization actions, efficiently and effectively

Disseminate explanations of the changes to be made and how they will be made to increase levels and forms of personalization for all students in order to enhance teaching quality

Challenge 2

Adapt and update the programmes we offer – present and future – to meet society's needs, in keeping with the University's knowledge areas and research lines, making the range of programmes a factor that sets the UOC apart

Objectives

Establish an integrated system for keeping track of trends and market demands, enabling the identification of future needs for education and training

Achieve new quality accreditations for our different area of education and training

Increase our flexibility, agility and interdisciplinarity when it comes to creating and updating the programmes we offer

Incentivize and support research in the knowledge areas of the learning programmes most in demand, and in areas where there are plans to improve, update or create programmes

Highlight within the information made public and the information passed to assessors the factors that set our programmes apart and keep them up-to-date and aligned with society's needs

Challenge 3

Define feasibility scenarios for a constantly changing present that reinforce that UOC's value proposition

Objectives

Improve the UOC's efficiency and sustainability, defining the optimum economic model (balance between public and private revenue) and growth projections for the 2022-2025 period including the necessary revenue and profit targets

Acquire in-depth understanding of the different profiles in our target audience and design a plan for building relationships and loyalty with each profile, including B2C and B2B actions

Improve the UOC's positioning and reputation as a leading provider of high-quality online education

Challenge 4

Establish a talent management strategy that enhances staff members' development, well-being and commitment

Objectives

Define a new leadership model, the digital competencies of staff, and the decision-making model

Enhance the UOC's status as an organization that leads the way in developing internal talent and generating loyalty, and is dynamic in attracting external talent

Challenge 5

Become a digital organization in a new global age

Objectives

Have our new work culture settled in, this being based on open work principles, asynchronous activity and digitalization

Have our main processes redefined and digitalized, increasing efficiency both internally in terms of organization and externally in terms of relations with third parties (e.g. students or public administrations)

Challenge 6

Make ourselves a data-informed organization that uses quality information as the basis for its actions

Objectives

Build a culture of data-driven decision-making

Implement the appropriate data governance policy, including mechanisms guaranteeing internal and external transparency and the FAIR data principles

Ensure that our data meets quality standards and is available and usable, using robust infrastructure
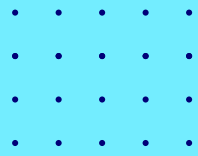
Challenge 7

Commit ourselves to people's access to higher education and to open knowledge as drivers of freedom and equality

Objectives

#GlobalUOC: make progress towards being a global UOC in all areas of the university

#EqualityUOC: ensure equal access and equality among students throughout their studies and careers, appreciative of their diversity

#OpenUOC: drive the UOC's transformation into a hub for open knowledge

Challenge 8

Commit ourselves to the planet and promote collective well-being for a more sustainable world

Objectives

Achieve climate neutrality at the UOC by 2030 (with governance and monitoring of quantitative indicators)

Develop actions to adapt to and mitigate climate change (activities/actions)

Provide the UOC community (students, alumni and staff) with the knowledge, skills and curiosity to lead and be part of the global transition to a more sustainable future
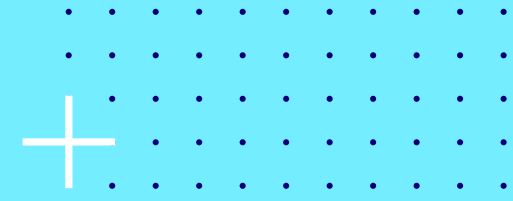
Challenge 9

Increase the transformational effect of education on people's employability, on organizations' competitiveness and on society's progress, by providing continuing education that meets current and future challenges, taking advantage of new technological opportunities

Objectives

Develop a comprehensive continuing education plan, offering a portfolio of courses and programmes that are oriented towards the productive sectors and the societal needs of each region, and enhancing students' employment prospects

Provide students with support and guidance to help them manage their careers, developing professional competencies and boosting workforce entry and entrepreneurship

Develop a job market surveillance and analysis service for the governance of employment data

Challenge 10

Define the overall value proposition of the UOC in collaboration with other businesses and institutions, focusing on the ecosystem in order to catalyse knowledge and learning to boost economic and social progress

Objectives

Compose a corporate ties plan revolving around knowledge exchange and connected to the needs of society in each region

Increase the UOC's social impact, generating greater and more diversified funding through a philanthropy programme involving the private sector, institutions and individuals

Position the UOC as a driver of innovation, encouraging knowledge exchanges between the UOC environment and other agents in the innovative system to find solutions to the challenges society faces

Challenge 11

Strengthen research and innovation in the intersection between technology and the social and human sciences, where the UOC aims to make its mark and generate societal impact

Objective

Consolidate our backing of interdisciplinary research, identifying challenges that require stable collaboration between disciplines in order to maximize impact

Challenge 12

Reinforce the UOC research ecosystem: the environment, conditions and resources for conducting research

Objectives

Fuel the research activities of people who are talented, motivated and well trained for conducting research

Allocate 5% of the UOC's budget to research programmes

Strategic Map

The strategy will be rolled out in 5 areas, encompassing 22 plans and 91 actions.

2022-2025

Be UOC
Collaborative governance, viability and digital transformation

Economic sustainability

Prepare 5-year financial projections

Consolidate the UOC's activities outside Catalonia, with a varied portfolio of priority territories and country/region plans

Consolidate the UOC Corporate and UOC X strategies to increase market position and share

Continue measures to streamline the portfolio, improve margins, reduce dropouts and CRA

Develop and implement a strategy to attract public and private funding

Reputation and positioning

Define and implement a strategy and campaign to enhance the UOC's reputation and position in priority territories

Implement the UOC portal transformation project and the international SEO strategy

Implement the transformation plan for UOC offices in Spain and LATAM

Continue to implement the global content plan

Define and implement a strategy to improve positions in rankings

Implement the brand tracker project to measure the impact of all actions related to improving positioning and reputation

New way of working

Define the new open work model

Facilitate the implementation of open work

Define a new leadership model and a new dictionary of competencies for UOC staff

Redesign the PID executive training programme based on the new leadership model

Digital skills training plan for staff

Define the decision-making model

UOC talent

Employer branding project

Talent management projects

Learning management system for staff project

Health and well-being project

Update research staff policy

Digitalization and efficiency

Efficiency project

E-administration project

Redefine and digitalize relevant processes by area

Robotize processes

Next UOC

Promotion of educational flexibility and cross-disciplinarity

Personalization in the UOC's educational model

Identify and specify personalization factors in the UOC's educational model

Define personalization and incorporate it by enabling technological functionalities and advanced use of data systems

Roll out digital assessment

Disseminate the educational model personalization indicators established (relating to the impact on reputation, student satisfaction, and higher quality teaching) and prepare a plan for announcing the results

Forecasting educational trends and creating new programmes

Identify information sources for monitoring market trends and demands, and decide how to coordinate, govern and combine them into a unified source, in order to identify future educational needs

Review processes linked to defining and revising new and existing programmes to enable more flexibility and agility

Identify programmes' standout innovations to bring them closer to needs in the world of work

Harmonization of knowledge areas across teaching and research

Compare the UOC's research map with the learning programmes most in demand

Incentivize research in the knowledge areas of the learning programmes most in demand

Encourage the transfer of research to the leaning areas most in demand

Adjunct instructor recruitment

Define the role, profile and hiring conditions of new adjunct instructors and consolidate this new role

Redefine the range of teaching roles and figures to accommodate the role of adjunct instructor, reinforce the UOC's teaching structure and respond to the new regulatory framework

Improve and make more scalable the recruitment processes for adjunct instructors and affiliated teaching staff to ensure coverage of needs, diversity of profiles and recruitment of talent

Based on needs arising from the evolution of the educational model and the types of learning programmes, identify changes and improvements to be introduced in the tasks and organization of teaching staff so the needs can be met with the highest levels of quality

Quality and new data culture

Consolidate the internal quality assurance system in the framework of institutional accreditation

Expand the quality system to cover all the organization's processes

Develop staff talent in the field of data

Develop the data governance model

Deploy the new institutional repository and build valuable services on it

Global UOC

A strong commitment to a global UOC with more societal impact that contributes to the 2030 Agenda

Global and social UOC

Roll out the plan for digital transformation in the education sector

Reinforce the internationalization of the UOC (in terms of its teaching, research and administration) and provide monitoring tools (scorecard)

Roll out the introduction of the global ethical commitment cross-disciplinary competency in all programmes and classroom content

Increase the proportion of global learning resources

Promote changes at the UOC and in university systems to fulfil the 2030 Agenda

Equality

Identify underrepresented groups for whom the UOC wants to ensure access and launch positive discrimination actions for each of them

Launch initiatives for equal access to UOC learning programmes

Launch initiatives for graduate equality at the UOC

Continue with the roll-out of the Gender Equality Plan 2020-2024

Produce and implement an action plan for UOC collaboration with the voluntary sector

Open knowledge

Continue with the roll-out of the open knowledge Plan

Reinforce actions that raise the profile of the UOC as a university committed to open knowledge

Incorporate the DORA principles into the UOC's academic assessment processes

Roll out specific open knowledge training for all UOC staff

Produce and implement internal and external action plans for the Hac Te initiative (the UOC as a hub for open knowledge in art, science and technology)

Environmental sustainability

Develop and implement the UOC's environmental sustainability plan, implementing actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change

Reduce the UOC's annual CO_2 emissions and report on them transparently

Review learning programmes that integrate a sustainability perspective and implement them again

Promote research on sustainability, climate change and related fields

Hold climate awareness and action activities for the UOC community

UOC Ecosystem

Increasing competitiveness and employability

Continuing education

Periodically review the range of continuing education to improve its adaptation to the needs of companies in key sectors and institutions in each territory, and to facilitate access to training for professionals

Enhance collaborations with organizations in each territory to promote on-the-job training

Employment and entrepreneurship

Encourage entrepreneurial culture among students through initiatives that foster entrepreneurship

Promote career guidance for students and their entry into the workforce

Promote research and development in new methodologies relating to employment and entrepreneurship

Provide the different knowledge areas with regular updates on job market developments

Promote the exchange of knowledge with companies and institutions on the challenges of the world of work

Design and implement an application for individual design of a career path

Corporate ties

Implement monitoring tools including B2B CRM

Design and implement a plan for corporate ties and ties with the UOC community, establishing shared criteria for measuring organizations' and alumni's ties (involvement and commitment) with the UOC

Produce a map of the UOC's current alliances to identify opportunities

Innovative ecosystem

Define, search for funding and implement the 2022-2025 transfer programme

Develop a plan to foster collaboration between agents in the entrepreneurial ecosystem and the UOC community

Develop a programme of training, outreach and dissemination actions to foster the culture of innovation in the UOC community

UOC Insight

Fostering transformative, high quality research

Transdisciplinarity

Define cross-disciplinary research challenges that can connect the lines of different research groups and knowledge areas

Promote a programme of incentives for interdisciplinary research

Implement the eLearning Research, eHealth Center and IN3 plans

Progress in research assessment

Promote training in impactful narratives as a better alternative for assessing the impact of research

Define and structure the research assessment process, focused on group and institutional assessment (in accordance with DORA)

Research ecosystem governance

Structure the governance of the ecosystem and promote the R&I hub

Promote external scientific communication in the context of the ecosystem

Increase the professionalism of support for research

Establish the coordination and management of experimental laboratories

Intensification and collaboration

Define the research intensification strategy for teaching staff

Attract emerging talent by means of new collaborations between established researchers and researchers aspiring to PI positions

Generate alliances with different centres and laboratories to conduct cutting-edge research

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