INTERNATIONALIZATION AS EDUCATIONAL POLICY. THE UNIVERSITY OF ALCALÁ IN THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

INTERNACIONALIZAÇÃO COMO POLÍTICA EDUCACIONAL. A UNIVERSIDADE DE ALCALÁ NO ESPAÇO EUROPEU DE ENSINO SUPERIOR

LA INTERNACIONALIZACIÓN COMO POLÍTICA EDUCATIVA. LA UNIVERSIDAD DE ALCALÁ EN EL ESPACIO EUROPEO DE EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR

Juan-Carlos LUIS-PASCUAL[1]

ABSTRACT: The new functions of the university in the integral development of the student suppose a strategy of continuous innovation to adjust, and even anticipate, to the prospective needs, both professionally and personally, of the citizens who will coexist in a global, interdependent and changing reality. The University of Alcalá integrates the historical tradition, the European geostrategic situation and its policy of flexibility, evaluation and constant adaptation to the company and society where it is located. Educational policy needs to have a clear purpose that allows the development of teachers' teaching competences to be combined with a perspective based on dialogical learning, formative and shared evaluation, collaborative work, inclusion and the management of uncertainty.

KEYWORDS: Educational policy. Initial formation. Mindfulness. Educational paradigm. Internationalization.

RESUMO: As novas funções da universidade no desenvolvimento integral do aluno supõem uma estratégia de inovação contínua para adequar e até mesmo antecipar as necessidades prospectivas, tanto profissionais quanto pessoais, dos cidadãos que conviverão em uma realidade global, interdependente e mutável. A Universidade de Alcalá integra a tradição histórica, a situação geoestratégica europeia e sua política de flexibilidade, avaliação e constante adaptação à empresa e à sociedade onde está localizada. A política educacional precisa ter um objetivo claro que permita combinar o desenvolvimento das competências de ensino dos professores com uma perspectiva baseada na aprendizagem dialógica, avaliação formativa e compartilhada, trabalho colaborativo, inclusão e gerenciamento da incerteza.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Política educacional. Formação inicial. Atenção Plena. Paradigma educacional. Internacionalização.

RESUMEN: Las nuevas funciones de la universidad en el desarrollo integral del estudiante supone una estrategia de innovación continua para ajustarse, e incluso adelantarse, a las necesidades prospectivas tanto a nivel profesional como personal de los ciudadanos que

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[1] University of Alcalá (UAH), Alcalá de Henares, Madrid – Spain. Director of the Department of Educational Sciences. PhD in Philosophy and Educational Sciences from the Complutense University. ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6215-115X. E-mail: juan.luis@uah.es

convivirán en una realidad global, interdependiente y cambiante. La Universidad de Alcalá integra la tradición histórica, la situación geoestratégica europea y su política de flexibilidad, evaluación y adaptación constante a la empresa y a la sociedad donde se enmarca. La política educativa requiere tener una finalidad clara que permita conjugar el desarrollo de las competencias docentes del profesorado con una perspectiva basada en el aprendizaje dialógico, la evaluación formativa y compartida, el trabajo colaborativo, la inclusión y la gestión de la incertidumbre.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Política educativa. Formación inicial. Atención plena. Paradigma educativo. Internacionalización.*

Introduction

Society is undergoing a vertiginous and continuous transformation, new challenges are posed with different interests and requirements for the university. Among the changes that are emerging are globalization and the universalization of information, the emergence of instant communication and social networks where we have at our disposal an enormous amount of data that we must know how to discriminate in a reflexive and critical way. For UNESCO (1998) the offer that higher education make to university students must be of high quality and adapted to the present and future needs of that society.

At the university, the teaching scenario has varied and it is insufficient to use old ways for the new functions, tasks and challenges imposed on higher education and university professors, which becomes the only reference of knowledge to become a facilitator guide, as pointed out by Gago and Vico (2013), which guides the student on possible ways to access knowledge. The teacher's first reaction tends to be resistance to such change (FORÉS MIRAVALLES; SÁNCHEZ VALERO; SANCHO GIL, 2014) but, if this approach is modified, it allows teachers to take on a challenge and an opportunity for personal and professional development (HARGREAVES, 2003). Teachers, in turn, must contemplate in their teaching the students' personal development (PASCUAL BAÑOS, 2002).

The establishment of a European Higher Education Area meant the realization of a whole repertoire of changes that lead the faculty to carry out their practice from a different perspective. We moved from a paradigm focused on teaching and the master class to a focus on learning, collaborative work and reflective, conscious and critical practice, where the teacher shares the responsibilities of assessment and provides greater autonomy to the student. Another factor that needs to be taken into account is the adequate appropriation, review and adaptation of such international programs, as stated by Amadio, Opertti y Tedesco (2015) to

avoid the risk of importing it in a decontextualized way that supposes and is associated with refusals, tensions and contradictions.

The main characteristics of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) will be specified below, with a special focus on European regulation, historical development and paradigm shift.

European guidelines, historical marks and regulations

- The creation of the European Higher Education Area comes with the signing of the Charter of European Universities. Signed in 1988 by the rectors of several European universities with the intention of harmonizing university studies, endorsed by the ministries of education first and by the universities later. In Spain, the repeal of the University Reform Act of 1983 (URA) and the approval of Organic Law of Universities 6/2001 (OLU), of 21 December, which authorized the transformation of university degrees to allow integration in the EHEA and the creation of the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (NAQAA).

- The Sorbonne Declaration (1998), which establishes the bases for the structuring of this European Higher Education Area: creation of a system of comparable academic degrees, structuring in degrees, masters and doctorates, establishment of ECTS credits and facilitation of mobility.

- Joint statement by the European Ministers of Education (1999) to coordinate their policies and create a Europe of knowledge, basically around three elements: First, a system of comparable degrees and the publication of an Information Supplement at the level, in order to make it public and transparent. Second, the structuring of studies in undergraduate and postgraduate courses. And, thirdly, the use of ECTS credits.

- Council of Europe meetings in Lisbon (2000) and Barcelona (2002) where the commitment of community institutions and universities themselves is reiterated.

- Prague academic declaration (2001) for the European Higher Education Area. Declaration of the meeting of European Ministers on the grounds of Higher Education in Prague, on 19 May 2001. Among its approaches, the following stand out, on the one hand: the encouragement of lifelong learning, which implies a step towards coordination between the initial formation and ongoing formation. And, on the other hand: the need for greater attention, sensitivity and adjustment to the fluctuating social demands that are considered in a

more specialized offer and a more active proposal by the student in the teaching-learning process proposed by the teacher.

- Conference of rectors of Spanish universities (CRUE) in (2002). The Bologna Declaration and its repercussions on the structuring of degrees in Spain and on the change in university culture, celebrated on 8 July 2002, which take advantage of the occasion to update in a coordinated way the structures, study plans, the ECTS credit system and learning methodologies.

- Conferences of ministers responsible for Higher Education in Berlin (2003) held on 19 September 2002 and the one in Bergen (2005) that facilitate the integration of results indicators in the assessment of competences and introduce the three university cycles: undergraduate, master's and doctorate, instead of those initially planned for undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

- Statement by European Ministers of Education in London (2007) spelled out new principles according to Pozo Andres (2008-2009), which focused on the teaching-learning process in learning and in the student.

- The Conference of European Ministers of Education in Leuven (2009) ends by prioritizing student-centered learning, facilitating the development of active methodologies.

In short, the proposal for European integration in relation to qualifications also meant a radical change at the methodological and cultural level. Credits that can be validated as ECTS, mean an increase in transparency and in the recognition of the qualifications of some countries by others. The main practical problems, which the teaching staff has had, associated with the implementation of the Bologna Program has been the difficulty of having small groups and adequate spaces for collaborative work.

Evolution of the university paradigm

The university, within the European Higher Education Area, becomes an increasingly complex dynamic institution with international projection, which following Amadio, Opertti and Tedesco (2015) has to be permeable, sensitive and adaptable to the changes and demands that emanate from society. Manzano Arrondo and Torrego Egido (2009) indicate three possible models for the university: the autonomous, which identifies the university as an independent corporation that deals with the transmission of knowledge and the formation of scientifically competent people; the model of excellence, which identifies the university as a

company subject to controls, which seeks efficiency and qualification of its graduates, and the committed model, which supports a university as the educational center that unites shared integral formation and relevant knowledge to solve the relevant problems of society.

The emerging paradigmatic proposal develops the different abilities of the student, which, according to Fernández March (2003) are: knowledge, know-how, knowing how to live together and knowing how to be.

- Knowledge (declarative knowledge), which refers to obtaining new knowledge, preferably related to each other, creating a high-quality cognitive network that allows for greater stability of such knowledge at this time. The topics that appear later tend to be based on other previous knowledge, generally simpler, more general and concrete.

- Know-how (procedural knowledge), which inserts the development of specific skills and abilities that allow the application of theoretical knowledge.

- Knowing how to live together (relational knowledge), which is associated with the development of social skills and which is concerned with improving the ability to work in groups, in teams, cooperating and collaborating.

- The knowing how to be (evaluative knowledge), which arises from the development of attitudes, personal skills and social commitment at an ethical and emotional level.

The European Higher Education Area intends to improve relations between the University and Society, to give more importance to know the social reality and identify its needs, where the university must be more fluid and agile, improving the interaction with its reality. Scolari, Di Bonito and Masanet (2014, p. 7, our translation) explain that the university of the future would have to be: "fun", "friendly", "plural", "deep". In this sense, Biggs (2006, p. 35, our translation) considers that the deep focus supposes the "need felt to approach the task in an appropriate and meaningful way, so that the student tries to use the most appropriate cognitive activities to develop it". In addition to "updated", "integrated", "synergistic", "fluid", "flexible", "adaptable", "balanced", "dialoguing", "transparent", "modular", "integrative", "expanded", "Centered", "specialized", "regenerated", "open", "passionate", "active", "accessible", "integral" and "self-criticism". Shortcomings are detected in the formative baggage of the university faculty in this integral education, especially in values. The university is sought as a *alma mater*, the recovery of humanism as a general

competence in the university, its meaning, its understanding, its holistic perspective and its raison d'être.

The main characteristics of such a paradigmatic change are:

- Subjects are computed by credits. This credit goes from 10 hours on-classroom to 25 hours, where assistance is recognized, but also the work, preparation and study of subjects, in such a way that attendance drops to approximately 8 hours per credit, since a discipline of 6 ECTS that equals 150 hours would have approximately 50 hours in classroom and 100 hours at distance.

- The philosophy of education at the university changes, from almost exclusive knowledge, from the learning contents (knowledge) to the application of such learning in different contexts (knowing how to do). The term of competence appears, which assumes the ability to be able to use learning as a criterion in real situations and to be able to adapt to different requirements and demands.

- At the methodological level, another important change is focused on how students learn, rather than just how teachers teach. That is, the importance of the student's interests and needs increases, trying to find relevant and higher quality learning that is more durable over time. This implies making new proposals for formative and shared assessment that will provide answers to these new challenges. The teacher is no longer the only reference of knowledge and there are multiple ways to access it, so the teacher changes his role and becomes a facilitator of learning for students.

- Declarative knowledge is no longer the only requirement for approving the subjects, learning is more related to previous knowledge (MARGALEF GARCÍA; PAREJA ROBLIN, 2008) and more connected to the changing reality of society and the company. The future professionals must adapt and interpret the reality, adjusting their proposals and their knowledge to the new future requirements or to more specific challenges such as "solving problems in a collaborative way" that explain INTEF (2016, p. 9, our translation).

- Group, cooperative and collaborative work becomes one of the best ways to learn beyond the sum of students' personal learning. In this sense, Rodríguez-Zapata and Luis-Pascual (2019) consider that the social skills to negotiate and lead the work teams become essential skills of social reality.

The student as protagonist of learning

The student becomes the main figure in regulating his own learning and even participates in the learning of his peers. He is given more autonomy, but also more responsibility. Greater participation and collaboration means greater motivation for students. For this, Finkel (2008) emphasizes the importance of letting students talk in the debates about the requested readings. Attention is focused on quality learning rather than strategic overcoming of disciplines. The challenge for the teacher encompases how to involve the largest number of students in the development of their own learning.

Spanish University

The Spanish university has a dual role, which is to maintain, on the one hand, the status of *alma mater* with generalist knowledge that makes it integrate education and formation, while on the other hand it tries to respond to greater specialization, which requires the best adaptation the labor market and the search and creation of job opportunities.

In Spain, 52% of the population has access to the university (with reference to the rate of net access to the university, the percentage is given by new students in relation to the total population at the same age of entry. What should be noted is that there is no discrimination in terms of the typology of this population and that they are taken into account with positive discrimination or help). According to Hernández Armenteros and Pérez García (2013) what this access supposes (see figure 1) is in line with the rest of the European Union countries.

Figure 1 – Net university access rate
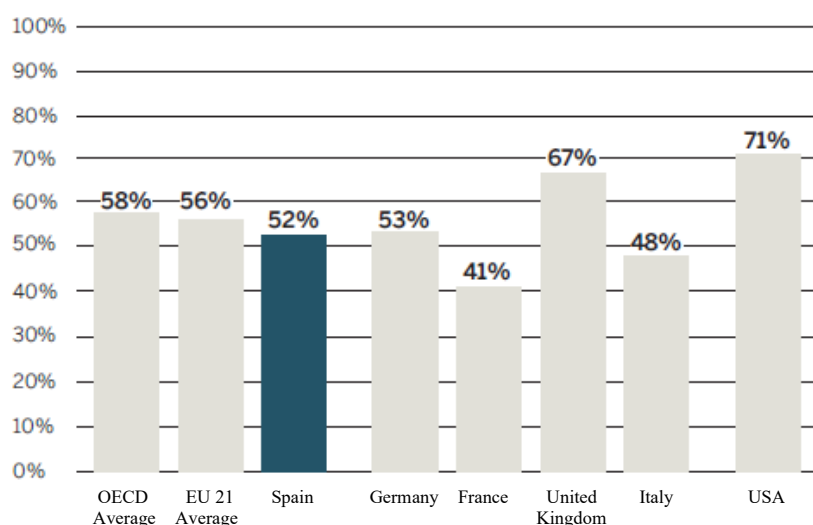
Source: Hernández Armenteros and Pérez García (2013, p. 10)

Organic Law of Universities

The emergence of the Organic Law of Universities (2001) led to Spanish integration in the EHEA, developing the Bologna Declaration (1999) and, later, the coordinated structuring of diplomas as a result of the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities (2002), in this sense it can be highlighted:

- Organic Law of Universities, according to Hernández Álvarez (2004, p. 40, our translation), OLU already puts in "its article 37 a prediction on the structure in cycles of university teaching".

- Royal Decree 1044 (2003) which establishes the norms for the European Supply to the title, as stated by Hernández Álvarez (2004, p. 45) "justifies its need for the diversity of teaching and titles that hinder mobility and the insufficient information contained in the official titles on the nature, level and content of the studies carried out". It increases transparency and the qualifications are equalized with the European ones, starting the Erasmus exchanges.

- Royal Decree 1125 (2003) establishing the European credit system, in which Hernández Álvarez (2004, p. 45) highlights that "it is not only a different equivalence between credit and classroom hours, but also a conception of distinct formation that must be sustained in the student's learning activity due to the achievement of greater autonomy". We begin to prioritize teaching from 10 hours of classroom credit to student learning from 25 hours of ECTS credit where it integrates and also recognizes the work done by students outside of class hours. In other words, the methodological level goes from the class with lecturer (which implies greater passivity for students) to collaborative work (which involves greater student participation).

Spanish University trends and challenges

The university is an institution that tends to maintain its traditions (MORALES, 2018). The transformation of the university structure, as pointed out by Scolari, Di Bonito and Masanet (2014, p. 2) so that it ceases to be a "medieval institution" so that innovation is not an empty and repetitive word, but that it actually accomplishes a change in the teaching discourse. The university must be an institution that is responsible for its social commitment (RINESI, 2012) and echoes what happens outside it.

4.1. University status in Spain

Scolari, Di Bonito and Masanet (2014) estimate that the Spanish university has: a lack of pedagogical preparation of the university faculty, excessive administrative bureaucratization, routine management, a rigid and power-based structure and a lack of contact with the world outside.

Table 1 – Shortcomings of the Spanish university and proposals for improvement

Shortcomings	Improvement proposals
Lack of pedagogical formation of the teaching staff	Institutional pedagogical continuing formation
Excessive administrative bureaucratization	Reduction of bureaucracy
Routine and rigid management	Self-review and management autonomy

Source: Scolari, Di Bonito and Masanet (2014)

To try to solve all of this, it is proposed (see table 1) continued pedagogical formation, a bureaucratic reduction, a self-review and management autonomy and a greater openness and number of exchanges.

Madrid University

The Community of Madrid hosts the largest concentration of university students in all of Spain, during the 2015-2016 course, 308,985 students attended the Higher Education Area of Madrid (EMES). In addition to the central headquarters of the National University of Distance Education (UNED) which has federal management and different headquarters throughout Spain, there are 14 universities in the Community of Madrid, six of which are public: Universidad de Alcalá (UAH), Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (UAM), Carlos III University (US3), Complutense University (UCM), Madrid Polytechnic University (UPM), King Juan Carlos University (URJ). In addition, eight private ones can be found: Alfonso X el Sabio University, Antonio de Nebrija University, Camilo José Cela University, CEU San Pablo University, European University of Madrid, Francisco de Vitoria University, Pontifical University of Comillas, University at a distance from Madrid (UDIMA).

The University of Alcalá is located in the Territorial Area Direction of East Madrid with total exclusivity, since the University Center Cardeal Cisneros is described at the University of Alcalá, welcoming on one of its three campuses the city of Guadalajara, which paradoxically belongs to the Community of Catilha la Mancha.

University of Alcalá

The University of Alcalá is a medium-sized university, which has approximately 29,000 students and 1,600 teachers, agile in its functioning and which makes it easier for teachers to have innovative initiatives. It is one of the 14 universities that owns the Community and Madrid and is located in the city of Alcalá de Henares where a Celtiberian settlement became a city called *Complutum* more than 2000 years ago with the arrival of the Romans and later populated by the Arabs was called *Alcalá* (basket) *la Vieja*.

General data

This section deals with the historical development of the University of Alcalá, the set of University and City of Alcalá de Henares as a World Heritage City, the characteristics, objectives and values of the University of Alcalá, the ranking of teaching in relation to other Spanish universities, the situation of the faculty and UAH guidelines and regulations.

Historical development

The University of Alcalá was founded by Cardinal Cisneiros in 1499, trying to combine the most traditional of the universities of Paris or Salamanca with the most innovative of the universities of Bologna or Leuven, emerging as an outpost of European Renaissance and humanist currents. During the 16th and 17th centuries, it became a prestigious academic center that welcomed great teachers of universal reading as teachers and students: Antonio de Nebrija, Tirso de Molina, Lope de Vega, Francisco de Quevedo, Ignacio de Lozoya and Juan de la Cruz. It should be noted that in the 18th century the first title of Doctor of Philosophy was awarded to a woman in Spain, Dona Maria Isidra de Guzmán y de la Cerda. In the 19th century it moved to Madrid under the name Central University, (later it would be called University of Madrid and finally Universidad Complutense de Madrid) but it reopened its classrooms as Universidad de Alcalá in 1977, thanks to the Society of Condueños.

Figure 2 – Outline of the medieval Alcalá as City of knowledge and the coexistence of the three cultures

Source: Author' archive

Cidade Patrimônio da Humanidade

The University of Alcalá was declared a World Heritage Site in 1998, being one of the five universities in the world recognized as such, together with the University of Coimbra (Portugal) in 2013, the National Autonomous University of Mexico (Mexico) in 2007, the Central University of Venezuela (Venezuela) in 2000 and the University of Virginia (United States) in 1987.

In this UNESCO grant to the University of Alcalá, the following were highlighted: the fact that it was the first university city planned in the Modern Age and also associated with the concept of the City of Knowledge (with its Polyglot Bible associated with the three cultures: Muslim, Jewish and Christian) and the coexistence of the same cultures (see figure 2). It is an exponent that the development of a multicultural, open and inclusive knowledge is possible.

Characteristics, purposes and values

The University of Alcalá is of an intermediate size in relation to Spanish universities, with about 29,000 students and about 1,600 professors, with a great dedication to postgraduate programs and a great sensitivity to collaboration between Latin American universities. It consists of three campuses: the historic campus, located in the center of the city of Alcalá de Henares, which holds degrees in Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts. The external campus, located on the outskirts of the city, which holds degrees in Health Sciences,

Biology, Pharmacy, Environmental Sciences, Chemistry and Polytechnic. And also the Guadalajara campus, with teaching courses from the Faculty of Education and also houses different courses in the Multidepartamental Building.

Figure 3 – UAH's situation in relation to the average of Spanish universities
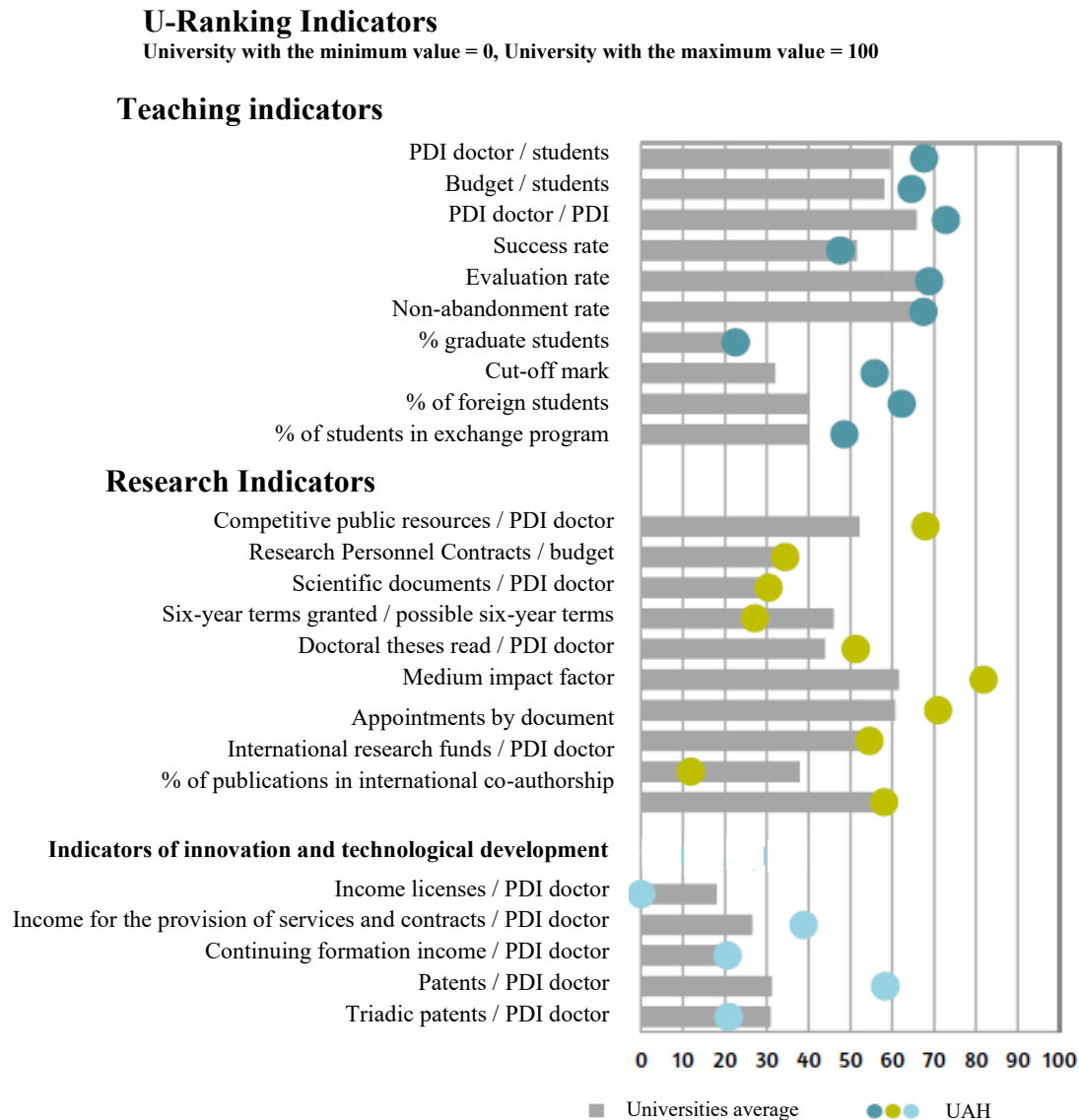
Source: Pérez e Aldás (2016, p. 82, our translation)

The University of Alcalá has established the following main objectives: "The integral formation of students and their personal and professional formation through quality education, the creation and transmission of knowledge and the extension of science and culture". All of this denotes its vocation to integrate education (general humanistic formation) and professional competence (specialized technical formation).

And as values: proximity to the teaching staff and dialogue between members of the educational community. To improve the quality of life of people through innovative methodologies, which for Zabalza Beraza in Pozo Andrés (2013, p. 67) considers innovative methodologies to be defined as "case studies", "problem-based learning", "teaching based on projects" and "collaborative learning". Especially with the participation of students in the teaching-learning processes. International vocation to promote the exchange of ideas and openness to the world. Social commitment to progress, equal opportunities and sustainability.

Teaching ranking

The University of Alcalá, in relation to teaching indicators (see figure 3) is above the average of Spanish universities, according to Pérez and Aldás (2016, p. 82), except for the success rate. The assessment rate and the non-abandonment rate are average. The cut-off mark and the percentage of foreign students which are well above average stand out.

Faculty situation

On the one hand, it is worth noting that the University of Alcalá has specific teacher formation and innovation programs that are part of its interest in the concern to improve teachers' teaching skills. Among the proposals are: The DOCENTIA program, the Teacher Education and Innovation Program and the Internal Promotion Plan, which allows the teaching staff to contrast and value their teaching practice, where student assessment, self-information and academic production intervene related to teaching.

Innovation and teacher formation

Within the program of innovation and teacher formation, different initiatives related to active methodologies and technological innovation are maintained, applied to teaching in line with the proposals for change and transformation of the university, proposed by Scolari, Di Bonito and Masanet (2014). For example, at the University of Alcalá pedagogical formation activities are carried out, such as: The improvement and dissemination of the use of the Virtual Classroom (Blackboard in the case for UAH), including proposals related to the *gamification* of learning and the promotion of Massive Open Online courses Courses (MOOC).

- Internationalization, with English courses given free of charge to the PDI and PAS on behalf of the British Council in order to increase the number of bilingual subjects at different levels. In addition to promoting Erasmus exchanges. Or also in a complementary way with the granting of international mobility grants or the participation of Universia-Santander grants.

- Methodological innovation, with formation proposals such as Flipped Learning, or the offer of an Official Master's Degree in University Teaching (MADU). Especially relevant is the development of soft skills, such as mindfulness (LUIS-PASCUAL, 2014; 2016; 2019) through university extension courses, from the Educational Sciences Institute (ICE) or from the Teaching Support Center (CAD), for the faculty of the University of Alcalá.

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