

Written interviews with external evaluators

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To be complemented with a Professional picture, a golden paragraph/pen profile

0. Small bio



Montse Guitert Catasús is a Lecturer at the Open University of Catalonia. Her research focuses on researching emerging educational scenarios and open, flexible, online teaching and learning strategies in order to transform and improve educational practice.

She is a principal investigator in the Edul@b research group, where she studies how institutions, organizations, teachers and administrators deal with new scenarios, especially those involving digital technologies, in order to stay ahead of change and improve teaching and learning processes. She explores how students learn throughout their lives (from school through to retirement) as citizens

and professionals.

Guitert's main research interests are collaborative learning, online teaching, and training in the use and application of digital technologies across different educational settings and levels. In addition, she studies training, assessment and accreditation in digital skills and learning ecologies as a basis for professional development.

1 Please tell us more about the pathway of the Open University of Catalonia

The creation of the UOC 30 years ago, which made it the first online university, can be described as a unique event, unlikely to happen again, in which a handful of extraordinary events came together: from the intellectual commitment and vision of the founding team to the political will expressed in the unanimous approval of the Parliament of Catalonia, the availability of disruptive technology, the inspiration to try a different learning model and the design of the university itself.

2 What is the greatest success the Open University of Catalonia has achieved so far in your field of competence?

According to the World University Rankings 2024, the UOC is among the top 7.6% of the world's leading universities, almost exactly the same as the previous year (7.7%). The Center for World University Rankings (CWUR) this year placed the UOC in 1,582nd place in the world, 534th in Europe and 47th in Spain. It measures the quality of students' education and learning, as well as the prestige of the faculty and quality of the research, without requiring surveys or data from the universities concerned.

3 What do you see as an added value of Soft Improve project about the existing training material for Soft Skills in employability?

The Soft Improve Project has been able to generate practical learning materials which can be easily used by anyone looking for a job at any time. This is a difference with other resources designed to improve soft skills where you need to attend fixed timetables to learn from these materials. The Soft Improve Academy allows for easy access and the materials are very well targeted at job seekers and entrepreneurs. In fact, as far as I understood, the particular set of soft skills depicted in the project was developed based on an extensive poll with potential target users.

4 In what way do you think the collaboration between Soft Improve project and (name of your company/organization) can benefit in the present and the future?

At the EduL@b Research group we are constantly looking for ways to improve how people are able to learn useful skills that improve their job prospects, their quality of life or their ability to succeed in the entrepreneurship world. This is highly correlated with the Soft Improve project goals and we are eager to see which are the project's conclusion. From here we are very interested in continuing the work done inside the project exploring ways to expand the Soft Improve methodology to other knowledge areas.