

Editorial

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In the last 10 years, there has been a sharp increase in the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in higher education, and it has been responsible for shaping new organisational and teaching models. In fact, the increase has been so significant that the experiences and profound transformations brought about by it have since become objects of study and scientific analysis. *RUSC. Universities and Knowledge Society Journal* has helped to disseminate research conducted in the field of e-learning in higher education over the past decade, and will continue to do so in the future. The issue presented here is an example of that, as it focuses on one particular sphere of influence: Ibero-America.

This issue contains a Special Section on "Education and technology in Mexico and Latin America. Perspectives and challenges". The Special section was made possible by the collaboration of the Mexican National System of Distance Education (SINED), and was coordinated by Margarita Ontiveros (SINED) and José Raúl Canay (University of Santiago de Compostela, USC, Spain). In addition, this issue contains 10 research articles, 6 of which are by authors from Latin American universities. It can therefore be said that this issue clearly focuses on the analysis of education and technology in Latin America.

The Special section presents and analyses a range of experiences of how e-learning is evolving in Mexico and Latin America. It is an important and useful contribution to research on the uses of certain technological tools or social networks in higher education. With a long history of distance education, Mexico is a country of reference in this context. The evolution of its universities has gone through a number of stages; from a traditional organisational model to a synchronous satellite model based on videoconferencing, and onto the current model driven by the technology of virtual campuses, social networks and the hybridisation of teaching-learning models. As a country of reference, Mexico has demonstrated its evolution to other countries in Latin America. In turn, these not only initiated numerous successful experiences of distance education, but have since gone on to do the same with online education. We are sure that the studies presented in this issue will be very useful to research on and the advancement of e-learning in the region, and we would encourage our readers and subscribers to disseminate them as widely as possible.

Please now allow me to give you a brief update on the progress that *RUSC* has made in the past few months, and on our future plans. *RUSC's* impact and visibility continue to rise. You will find the

data on the 'Indexing' page of the *RUSC* website. An aspect that I would particularly like to highlight is *RUSC*'s position in the Google Scholar h5-index provided by Google Scholar Metrics, which is one of the most important indices for rating scientific output. *RUSC*'s h5-index is 12, and the journal is 40th in the list of the top 100 journals in Spanish. This position is undeniably significant because the list refers to all journals published in the Spanish-speaking world.

Work has also been done on improving *RUSC*'s quality as a scientific journal. The journal has undergone a rigorous process of checking and assessing internal quality and editorial procedures. As a result of that process, *RUSC*'s Editorial Board has made a number of important changes, which are already visible. The journal's website now contains much clearer explanations of the editorial procedures and responsibilities (I particularly recommend reading 'RUSC's Editorial Team functions'). I would also like to highlight two especially important changes that have a direct impact on improving *RUSC*'s quality: the new Author Guidelines and the changes made to the peer review process.

The Author Guidelines clearly stipulate the types of article that the journal wants to publish. They define the journal's thematic focus and scope, and provide instructions for authors to follow when submitting original manuscripts. We have also made a number of changes to the structure of research articles, to the citation and referencing system, and to the checklist for manuscript submission. Regarding the peer review process, which is undertaken mainly by members of *RUSC*'s Scientific Editorial Board, we have made some changes to the actual process and to the article review form. You will be able to find them in the corresponding sections of the journal's website.

Once again, I would like to thank you all for your support, and would invite you to share our journal and the articles published in it with your collaborators, and to take them into account in your research and publications.

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