

Editorial

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It is a pleasure to present the first issue of Volume 11 of *RUSC. Universities and Knowledge Society Journal*, which includes important contributions to our field of knowledge: e-learning and universities in the network society. There are 9 articles in the Research Articles Section and 6 in the Special Section. The works are by authors from 20 educational institutions in 6 countries. Once again, the journal is making an open, global and integrative contribution by disseminating the results of research into education and technology that is being conducted in various parts of the world.

The Special Section of this issue contains articles that analyse and evaluate the use of learning apps for mobile devices in higher education. It is a highly topical issue that, in recent years and months, has been the focus of numerous studies. The Special Section was coordinated by Professor Mohamed Ally, a renowned researcher in this field from the Technology Enhanced Knowledge Research Institute (TEKRI) at Athabasca University, Canada, and Dr Josep Prieto, a researcher in the Mobility, Multimedia and Multidevice innovation group (mUOC) at the Open University of Catalonia (UOC), Spain. Both are experts in the field of learning apps for mobile devices, and we are very grateful to them for their support and involvement in the Special Section.

Mobile devices – tablets and smartphones – have become increasingly prominent in higher education over the past decade. We are in the era of mobility, of the ability to access information and learning anywhere thanks to mobile devices and learning apps designed specifically for them. This opens up an important field of research for education in general and for universities in particular. *RUSC. Universities and Knowledge Society Journal* has therefore sought to bring knowledge to the scientific community by disseminating the works presented in the Special Section. In their introductory article to it, Professor Ally and Dr Prieto give an overview of the state of the art of mobile learning, or m-learning. The Special Section contains contributions like the one by Rius, Clarisó and Masip that reports on the results of a study conducted at the UOC on the use of learning apps for mobile devices by students on bachelor's degree courses. Their study explores the use of various m-learning technologies, the students' involvement in the development and use of apps, and the institution's views and exploitation of them thanks to open source code. Gibran Alejandro García,

from the International Christian University, Japan, presents a Japan-based case study about mobile device-mediated collaboration and interaction, which highlights the enormous potential of these devices for online collaboration among students. The contribution by Monguillot, González, Guitert and Zurita, also explores collaboration through the use of mobile devices in several schools in Barcelona, Spain. In this case, they provide results from the analysis of a collaborative experience using QR codes. López and Silva from the Technical University of Cartagena (UPCT), Spain, offer an insight into m-learning patterns in virtual classrooms, and show how a significant number of students access virtual classrooms from apps for mobile devices. Redondo, Fonseca, Sánchez and Navarro from the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya-BarcelonaTech (UPC), Spain, and Ramon Llull University (URL), Spain, focus their study on m-learning in a field of teaching – Architecture and Building Construction – using 3D models and QR codes too.

In the Research Articles Section, there is a range of contributions on the specific topics covered by *RUSC. Universities and Knowledge Society Journal*. On this occasion, we are publishing three articles from different Mexican universities, four from Spain and one each from Chile and Cuba.

RUSC. Universities and Knowledge Society Journal is continuing to make progress and its impact is rising. This is confirmed by the citation indices in which the journal is included, and particularly by the analysis systems of Google Scholar and other specialist search engines. The goal that we are working hard to achieve is to make the journal highly relevant to researchers in the fields of learning and technology in higher education. The journal is an excellent platform for disseminating the results of research connected with its thematic areas. As such, the next target we have set ourselves is to concentrate on improving the service that we offer to authors; to the researchers who choose to have their research published in our journal. The key focus is to ensure a selection of academically significant, high-quality articles by applying a rigorous and reasoned peer-review process, which, from the authors' point of view, is designed to guarantee objectivity and to improve the formal and academic approach to the articles submitted. We are seeking to offer a specialised dissemination and distribution service for each article via the Internet in general and via specific or author-selected networks in particular. We are also focusing on providing the journal's authors and readers with a variety of metrics to track how each published article is performing. While we already offer this service to authors who specifically request it, we shall be rolling it out to everyone in the near future. In short, our aspiration is to provide authors with the best possible service to support them throughout the process of improving their articles and during the dissemination and distribution of their contributions.

In the last 6 months, *RUSC. Universities and Knowledge Society Journal* had 32,383 visits, 22,947 of which were unique. By country, 27.23% of the visits were from Spain, 14.27% from Mexico, 14.12% from Colombia; 8.22% from Argentina, 3.74% from Peru, 3.15% from the United States and less than 3% (fewer than 1,000) from other countries; thus, we continue to have many followers in Spain and Latin America. Google Analytics was the source of these data.

As usual, we shall continue to make ongoing improvements to the journal's visibility and design, and to its academic rigour and quality assurance processes, and will keep you abreast of all new developments via our subscription service.

As the journal's editors, we are always open to your suggestions for improvement. Furthermore, we trust that your interest in the articles published in *RUSC. Universities and Knowledge Society Journal* will spur you to let others know about them. Thank you for your collaboration.

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