Portal Todo TP

Promising Practice

Implemented by: Duoc UC

Where: Chile

Status: Launched in April 2022

Summary: Todo TP is a web portal which was designed to support the transition of people into technical and professional higher education, where information and guidance is offered to those wishing to make informed decisions when pursuing higher education studies.

Education 2030

Overview

Duoc UC is a Catholic private higher education institute with 54 years of experience and it is linked to the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. The institute trains people in the technical and professional fields. It strives to contribute to the workforce in a meaningful way and is committed to the development of society. Duoc UC is a community of more than

100,000 students,

4,000 teachers and

2,000 collaborators.

It is present in **5 regions** of Chile

with **20 campuses** and

9 schools.

Description

An open web portal that is accessible to all

The main goal of *Portal Todo TP* is to aid the transition of students from high school to higher education, through diverse resources available free of charge and open to the educational community. The web portal is useful for students, teachers, parents and guardians.

Facilitating transitions to higher education

The portal is divided in three areas:

- Find your vocation: Through audiovisual resources, users can get to know the training areas where new technical and professional employees are needed.

- Search information: Information on how to access student benefits offered by the State (gratuity, scholarships and loans) and advice to aid the transition into higher education and job placement is provided.

- Educational path: This provides access to an asynchronous virtual learning environment with courses on general and specialized areas. Courses are supported by Duoc's teachers and tutors. Those that are successfully finished by participants are recognized if students decide to further their studies in higher education.

Improving quality of learning for Chilean students

Portal Todo TP is part of Duoc's commitment to improving learning quality for students in Chile and providing support for educational trajectories. Its goal is to reduce asymmetries of information from what technical and professional education can bring and those learning gaps or vocational guidance that students can have, especially students from vulnerable contexts. The initiative strengthens the link with the educational system through in-person workshops, training of directors and teachers, as well as motivational activities.

Objectives

Firstly, Duoc UC sought to make the portal available for the entire educational community during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. The content developed aids in the students' transition into higher technical and professional education. Since its launch, *Portal Todo TP* has had over 50,000 visits and it has been complemented by in-person workshops that have reached over 2,000 students. Secondly, access was granted to high standard courses, allowing educational communities to access general and specialized training to support the transition from high school to higher education, while strengthening the professional development and interests of individuals.

Lastly, to increase the portal's impact, workshops and talks were organized to improve *Portal Todo TP*'s usage and deliver tools for career development.

Addressing the high rates of school dropouts while transitioning from high school to higher education

The initiative addresses the high rates of school dropouts in the transition from high school to higher education and during the first years of studies, mostly related to the lack of vocational and professional guidance.

According to a 2022 study published by the Ministry of Education in Chile:

- More than 30% of freshman year students drop out of school;

- Almost 18% of these dropouts never re-enroll in higher education institutions, where almost 80% of them are the first generation in their families to ever have access to higher education; and

- School dropouts during freshman year represent 24% in Chilean universities, 32% in technical training centres and 34% in professional institutes.

According to the University of Chile's Microdata Centre, the main causes for dropping out are vocational crisis, economic difficulties, and academic performance.

In Chile, more than half of the students who entered higher education in 2022 chose a technical programme (2 years) or a professional one (4 years). However, the focus on promoting policies and access is mainly centered on universities. The implementation of *Portal Todo TP* as a strategy aims to reduce information asymmetries and makes pedagogical resources available to bridge the learning gaps that can affect the progress and retention in higher education. It particularly connects technical and professional vocations with the technological and digital transformations and the transition into green jobs.

The strategy, using digital platforms, favours linkages between secondary and tertiary levels of education that are still segmented in Chile, while making students and their educational trajectories and life projects the focus.

Outcomes and impact

During 2022, a myriad of professional guidance talks and workshops were held, in which more than 2,000 people participated: among them 65 officials of educational establishments and over 1,900 students. The portal has registered more than 50,000 visits since its launch.

In these workshops, students are invited to reflect on different aspects of their future. The idea is that their learning or career plan should be formulated based on an initial assessment of the young person's profile and existing skills and should build on these. It should also identify an individual's needs, such as in terms of learning support.

Taking this kind of holistic approach to the development of the plan and basing it on an in-depth individual assessment, rather than providing 'directional' guidance, is more likely to be successful within their context and personal needs.

Challenges

Recognizing the website as a useful source of information

One of the challenges was to ensure that potential users recognize the website as an interesting source of information for them and useful for their decision-making process. This was addressed by compiling in a single virtual space, all the necessary contents related to career development, so that anyone who is interested in the professional and technical world can find disciplinary guidance, professional guidance and employability information.

Integrating the content of Todo TP

Another challenge was for educational establishments to systematically and permanently integrate the content of Todo TP to facilitate decision-making career training paths among their students. This was addressed by collaborating with schools to observe teachers' diverse needs, which led to the development of different educational resources based on the observed needs. The activities' development and quality are evaluated constantly, along with the permanent update of the website's material, which identifies good practices and pedagogical recommendations.

Strengthening specialization in career guidance

A final challenge was the lack of specialization in career development for professionals working in education. To address this, the portal was equipped with tools for teachers and the whole educational community. These tools provide guidelines for better counselling while working with students on their future career. The tools also address issues related to the additional support needed by students, contributing to breaking down barriers for effective learning. The latter also contributes to increased student motivation, attendance and, ultimately, success rates.

Insights

One of the insights is the importance of working together with teachers and parents/guardians, in their key role to support the students' decision-making process. Some parents/guardians do not understand the importance of pursuing higher education for their children or do not understand how it works and, thus, do not support them in the process. The latter might be a factor for students dropping out.

Another insight is the benefits of starting to work on transitioning to higher education progressively in the early years of formal education. It has been observed that career development can be started early and that this is beneficial for young students. This allows them to start questioning and finding their likes, dislikes and talents early on and enables them to make better decisions at a later stage.

Next steps

Duoc UC plans to:

- Become recognized in Chile for professional and employment guidance;

- Incorporate additional content, taking into consideration the users' suggestions and observations;

- Expand the coverage of face-to-face activities for students, directors, teachers and high school counsellors; and

- Implement a more immediate channel to resolve queries of the platforms' users.