

QUALITY POLICIES

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I. INTRODUCTION

The joint Quality Policies of the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies of Pisa and the Institute for Advanced Studies of Pavia (IUSS) (hereinafter also referred to as the “**Quality Policies**”) define the fundamental principles and guidelines of the Quality Assurance processes (hereinafter also referred to as “**QA**”) of the federated Schools, identifying actions for the continuous improvement of quality and the pursuit of objectives of excellence.

The action adopted by the Schools is guided by the lines indicated in the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)¹ and is consistent with the requirements for the accreditation of the Schools of Advanced Studies with special autonomy envisaged by the legislation in force.

The Schools promote the dissemination of culture, methods and tools relating to quality, self-assessment, critical approach and continuous improvement in the management of all processes which contribute to improving the quality.

The Schools have adopted a specific AQ system in order to implement the Quality Policies, promoting its development and dissemination, and for this purpose they envisage adequate internal support facilities, coordinating their actions through the joint Quality Enhancement Committee.

The Quality Policies are drawn up in line with the priorities and strategic objectives defined by the Schools' Planning Tools and represent an essential implementation tool.

¹ https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf

II. QUALITY POLICY FOR RESEARCH

II.1. Enhancing freedom, variety and diversity of the forms of research

The Schools acknowledge and enhance the strategic central focus and irreplaceable importance of research in all its forms, respecting its freedom and variety. In this sense, the Schools are committed to a correct distribution of the financial resources available in their respective budgets and in every way favour the acquisition of funds for public and private research by all researchers.

II.2. Incentive to achieve project excellence

The Schools promote project excellence by encouraging multidisciplinary approaches and interdisciplinary collaboration, making available to researchers administrative resources dedicated to collaborative support, both in the phase of developing research projects and in their respective implementation and reporting phase.

II.3. Enhancing research equipment

The Schools promote research excellence by supporting the setting up and maintenance of research laboratories, by systematising the resources available in the respective facilities, encouraging their sharing and maximising their use.

II.4. Encouraging the internationalisation of research

The Schools encourage research in collaboration with foreign colleagues, supporting visits and exchange programmes for researchers at all levels.

II.5 Monitoring results

The Schools adopt a flexible system to monitor the results periodically, by defining specific indicators, to encourage the achievement of the objectives indicated by the Planning Tools.

II.6 Ensuring recruitment quality

The Schools guarantee the quality of the recruitment of all the staff by adopting scrupulous selection procedures and constant monitoring of the results achieved.

The Schools implement programming procedures, at a central level and for the individual academic facilities, in order to recruit professors and researchers, paying particular attention to the consistency of these programmes with the research and training development plans of the facilities in question, and take into account the sustainability of the planned initiatives over time.

The Schools prepare adequate assessment tests so that the selection procedures are based on merit and also intervene with active policies, to eliminate gender or other types of disparities which condition the possibilities of enhancing merit.

The Schools adequately verify the effectiveness of the recruitment processes carried out, also in terms of the sustainability of the teaching and research initiative; the Schools implement possible corrective actions, enhance internal resources by offering opportunities for professional development and systematically promote the improvement and innovation of teaching and the link between teaching and research.

II.7 Enhancing and developing doctorate programmes

The Schools recognise the importance of doctorate programmes as a springboard for research activities, and enhance the PhD programmes, also encouraging international collaborations, and increase the number and size of the programmes offered, also in collaboration with each other, within the limits of the available resources.

III. QUALITY POLICY FOR TEACHING ACTIVITIES

III.1. Qualification guarantee and review of the training offer

The Schools ensure, through their own QA system, that the development and improvement objectives are adequately pursued, both internally and in relation to their stakeholders, in order to improve the training offer and to guarantee its quality.

In guaranteeing the qualification, review and expansion of the training offer, the Schools ensure effective and efficient learning, giving adequate consideration to the proposals of the students, guaranteeing the sustainability of the programmes in terms of teaching resources and facilities, and strengthening the link with the labour market. The Schools' commitment to an innovative and high-quality training offer represents one of the pillars on which the Schools intend to enhance the potential of the federated system (point VI.2).

III.2. Enhancing and strengthening the international dimension

The Schools enhance the international dimension of their teaching activities through the improvement of the training offer in foreign languages, the promotion of exchange programmes for students and members of the teaching staff with quality foreign academic institutions and the European accreditation of the courses of study.

III.3. Developing a greater awareness of the courses in relation to research topics cultivated by the Schools' teaching staff

It is possible to encourage a more direct involvement of the students by designing advanced courses relating to the most cultivated research topics in the Schools, thereby obtaining the twofold advantage of a greater dialogue between the teaching staff and the students and a closer "in the field" approach of young people to the world of research.

III.4. Strengthening the use of innovative teaching techniques

The Schools guarantee the quality of the teaching by promoting the use of innovative methods, techniques and technologies which encourage student participation and involvement and encourage learning coaching, active learning and mentoring practices, in line with the European student-centred learning policies.

The Schools develop training methods and practices which foster dialogue and the exchange of ideas, in the same spirit that informs scientific debate.

III.5. Implementation of IT systems

The Schools implement the most modern IT systems to support and aid teaching with the aim of facilitating the efficient management of the relationships between the students and the Schools and creating a high-quality study and work environment.

III.6. Strengthening the study support and inclusion activities

The Schools adopt measures aimed at ensuring an improvement in the quality of the services to students, starting from the guidance activities, with the aim of facilitating a fruitful integration of the Schools (academic induction) in the student community, the normal completion of the training programme, supporting the right to study and simplifying administrative procedures, and by intensifying the digitalisation of the processes.

IV. QUALITY POLICY FOR THE THIRD MISSION

IV.1. Recognition of the Schools' social responsibility

The Schools recognise their social responsibility both towards the students and towards the local and national community of which they are a part, and they discuss with the main stakeholders the objectives and actions to be taken in order to achieve them, collecting and enhancing the issues emerging in the different social fields and productive sectors and fostering a network with the Schools' former students.

To this end, the Schools offer clear, accurate, objective and accessible information on their activities, they set up and make public a system of checks to enable the various stakeholders to ensure the Schools are able to carry out and effectively fulfil the commitments undertaken by them towards the community of which they are a part.

IV.2. Transparency of the research activities, public dissemination of knowledge and accessibility of the results

The Schools support policies aimed at increasing the visibility and transparency of the research activities, as well as increasing the public dissemination of knowledge and accessibility of the scientific results, developing synergies and strengthening the collaboration between scientists and society, supporting dissemination and public engagement activities, and exploring the use of new platforms and formats to share and publish data and research results.

IV. 3. Enhancing and strengthening placement activities

The Schools recognise the importance of their role in facilitating the entry of their students into the world of work. In order to achieve this objective, the Schools allocate specific resources to organise events, within the Federation, for meetings between companies and students, Job Fairs and to finance projects dedicated to placement.

The Schools continuously monitor and promote the marketability of the skills they train in the reference communities, and work to interpret and respond to the training needs expressed by stakeholders in order to make the most of their scientific capabilities and skills.

IV. 4. Enhancing and strengthening the technology transfer activities

The Schools promote the transfer of research results to society in order to contribute to cultural and economic development.

To this end, the Schools participate in the Joint Technology Transfer Office (“JoTTO”) of IMT Lucca, the “Scuola Normale Superiore” of Pisa, the Sant’Anna School of Advanced Studies of Pisa and the Institute of Advanced Studies of Pavia (IUSS) and, however, are willing to assess proposals and requests from the world of local, national and international production.

V. QUALITY POLICY FOR SERVICES

V.1. Analysis of students’ needs

In the periodic review of the different types of services to be offered to students (colleges, canteen facilities, and libraries), the Schools focus their attention on the students’ needs, through the use of survey tools, with the aim of ensuring the highest possible satisfaction within the available resources.

V.2. Implementing satisfaction monitoring systems

The Schools implement periodic monitoring systems to verify the level of student satisfaction, in order to ensure constant control of the quality of the various services offered and its evolution over time.

V.3. Verifying the data and defining the consequent actions

Verifying and monitoring the actions taken in order to improve the management and the subsequent interpretation of the data obtained represent the operational precondition to define the consequent actions. The Schools identify a clear and specific procedural sequence in order to enable a rapid response to any critical issues found in the service provided.

VI. QUALITY POLICY FOR THE SYNERGISTIC EXPLOITATION OF SYSTEM POTENTIAL

VI.1. Enhancing the potential of the internal system

Each of the Schools promotes the integrated exploitation of the full potential of its internal system. The creation of bridges between the different sectors, for example, teaching and research, and the synergistic collaboration between the administration and teaching staff represent the preconditions for a continuous and significant improvement of the School's performance, to be measured using specific indicators.

VI.2. Enhancing the potential of the federated system

The Schools also promote an integrated exploitation of the full potential of the federated system established among them and together with the "Scuola Normale Superiore" of Pisa.

The first important results were obtained with the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies (SSSA) and Institute for Advanced Studies of Pavia (IUSS) joint Quality Assessment Committee, the organisation of the Job Fair, with the implementation of the Joint Technology Transfer Office ("Jotto") and with the definition of other common projects.

Implementing the potential of the federated system will be achieved further through actions aimed at increasing teaching synergies, fostering the establishment of federated research initiatives and structures and facilitating the involvement of the communities of Honours Course students and PhD programme students in joint cultural and research initiatives. To this end, the Schools will identify suitable organisational solutions and allocate ad hoc financial resources. The activities to strengthen and implement the federated system will be monitored with a view to achieving even more significant results in terms of quality.