UNIVERSITÀ DI PARMA

PRESIDIO DELLA QUALITÀ DI ATENEO

Quality Assurance System Structure

The Quality Assurance System (QA) ensures that policies and objectives related to overall quality are met.

Approved by the Senato Accademico *(Academic Senate)* **on 28/03/2017 - Revised on 23/04/2018 and 26/01/2021**
Approved by the Consiglio di Amministrazione *(Board of Directors)* **on 30/03/2017 - Revised on 24/04/2018 and 27/01/2021**

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**UNIVERSITÀ
DI PARMA**

PRESIDIO DELLA QUALITÀ DI ATENEO

Summary

I.   INTRODUCTION

The University of Parma, in line with its guiding values and strategic guidelines, has decided to adopt a Quality Assurance (QA) system inspired by national and international best practices.

Consistent with the ethos defined in the University Statute (*Statuto dell'Ateneo*), the University of Parma's Quality Assurance system is aimed at guaranteeing the effectiveness and efficiency of training processes, scientific research, 'Third Mission' activities (aimed at societal impact and integration), and resource management as defined in the three-year Strategic Plan (*Piano Strategico*) and in the Integrated Plan (*Piano Integrato*) for the management of the performance cycle. To this end, the QA promotes systematic actions for the monitoring, assessment and verification of overall performance and results.

The policymaking of the Quality Assurance system of the University of Parma is directed by the University's Top Academic Bodies (*Organi Accademici di Vertice dell'Ateneo*), i.e., the Rector (*Rettore*), the Academic Senate *(Senato Accademico),* the Board of Directors *(Consiglio di Amministrazione),* and the Director General (*Direttore Generale*).

The Governing Bodies (*Organi di Governo di Ateneo*) of the University guarantee the revision of the policies, as well as the implementation and updating of the Quality Management System, aimed at the achievement of objectives and continuous improvement, in accordance with the Italian Higher Education Quality Assurance system called the AVA (*Autovalutazione, Valutazione periodica, Accreditamento*), or, the Self-assessment, Periodic Evaluation, Accreditation system. The system identifies the activities that ANVUR, the National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes *(Agenzia Nazionale per la Valutazione delle Università e della Ricerca)* has put in place to implement the provisions of Law 20/12/2010, no. 240 and Legislative Decree 27/01/2012, no. 19. These provide for the introduction of the system of initial and periodic accreditation of Degree Programmes *(Corsi di Studio)* and university sites, periodic evaluation of the quality, efficiency and results achieved by universities, and the strengthening of self-assessment measures for the quality and effectiveness of teaching and research activities.

Given the importance of quality in the University of Parma system, the University Statute envisions the University Quality Committee (*Presidio della Qualità di Ateneo*) as a University Body and, in Article 16, provides for and regulates its functions and composition.

The University of Parma, in order to strengthen its internal quality assessment process, has selected other 'actors' to connect with and support the QA actors envisioned by ANVUR.

II.   QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM STRUCTURE

Diagram 1 illustrates the structure of the University of Parma's QA system and highlights the relationships between the system's actors, objectives, and periodically produced documents to verify the actions undertaken and to guarantee continuous improvement.
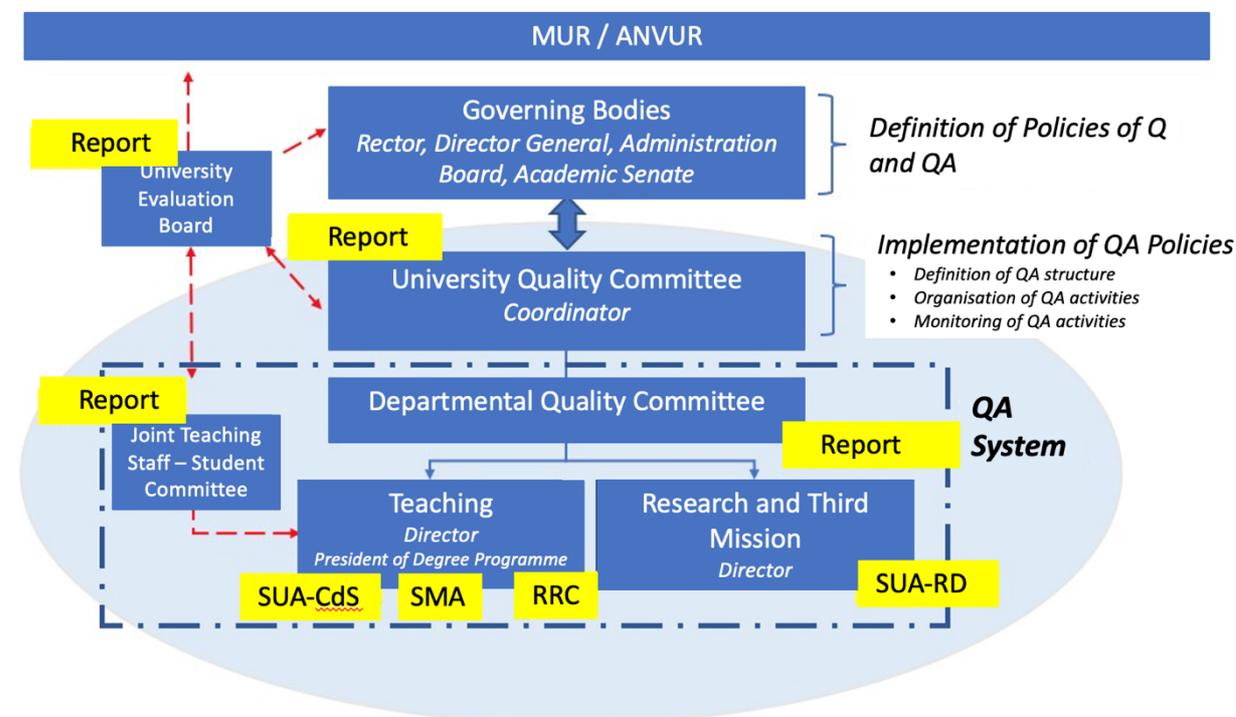
Diagram 1 - QA System Structure

The actors of the QA system are listed below. Guidelines and objectives for the implementation of the quality policy and continuous improvement measures are identified for each of them. Furthermore, every year a General Review *(Riesame Generale)* of the QA System is conducted.

III.   *UNIVERSITY BODIES*

The University Bodies in charge of defining the Quality Policy are: the Governing Bodies, i.e., the Rector, the Board of Directors and the Academic Senate, and the Director General.

They are specifically tasked with:
- keeping the Quality Policy and its objectives up to date;
- promoting the Policy and its objectives with openness, sharing and maximum involvement of the entire organisation;
- assigning responsibilities according to the objectives to be achieved;
- ensuring that a quality management system is established, implemented and kept up to date; such a system should be aimed at implementing quality policies and pursuing quality objectives, in the logic of continuous improvement;
- taking decisions on actions related to Quality Policy objectives, as well as actions for the improvement of the Quality management system;
- ensuring the revision of Quality Policy objectives, also in response to the periodic evaluation of

the results of the Quality Assurance system.

The composition of the Board of Directors and the Academic Senate is defined by the University Statute and includes adequate representation of the teaching, technical-administrative and student components.

THE COMMISSION FOR PLANNING, PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY

The Monitoring, Quality and Evaluation Commission (*Commissione Monitoraggio, Qualità e Valutazione*) has been operational since 2010 in recognition of the need to address the University's planning strategy and objectives. The Commission coordinates and develops synergies between policy and management, teaching and administrative and technical support, and more generally among all university areas, departments, and centres. With the goal of paying constant and careful attention to the needs of the main users and implementing continuous improvement and quality assurance paths and processes, the Rector established, by D.R. 249/2018 of 05/02/2018, the Planning, Performance and Quality Commission (*Commissione Pianificazione, Performance e Qualità)*, subsequently supplemented by R.D. No. 483 of 27/02/2019 and R.D. No. 2357 of 03/10/2019.

The Commission has the following responsibilities:
Planning:
- coordination of the University's strategic and programmatic planning;
- drafting of policy documents;
- provision of guidelines for dissemination and implementation;

Performance:
- coordination of the activities mentioned in Legislative Decree 150/2009 and any subsequent amendments and additions;
- the liaising, sharing, evaluation and creation of proposals for performance, transparency and anti-corruption activities, with a focus on the harmonisation and integration of relevant content as well as adherence to strategic programmes;
- drafting performance cycle documents;
- maintaining relations with relevant stakeholders, both internal and external to the University;
- provision of guidelines for the actualization and dissemination of performance targets;

Quality:
- sharing and endorsement of institutional documents relating to the Quality Assurance guidelines established by the University Quality Committee and ensuring their fulfilment.

With these objectives, the Commission consists of:
- The Rector or his delegate

- The Vice Rectors
- The Director General or their delegate
- The Managers
- The Coordinator of the Evaluation Board (*Nucleo di Valutazione*) or their delegate
- The Coordinator of the University Quality Committee or their delegate
- two Department Directors selected by the Academic Senate

- two students selected by the Student Council

The Commission operates with the support of specialized administrative and technical personnel selected from within the University.

Finally, the Commission identifies specific times to share their activities with the Board of Directors, inviting members of the Body to the relevant meetings.

IV. *UNIVERSITY QUALITY ASSURANCE*

The University Quality Committee (*Presidio della Qualità di Ateneo* - PQA) is an operational structure with tasks and functions assigned to it by the Statute and by the University Governing Bodies. It constantly interacts with both the University Bodies, referred to in Section III, and with the departmental teaching and research structures through the Departmental Quality Committee (*Presidio della Qualità di Dipartimento* - PQD).

The University Quality Committee is tasked with the promotion, surveillance and monitoring of continuous quality improvement and defines processes and procedures for Quality Assurance.

The composition of the University Quality Committee is defined by the University Statute and includes six tenured University professors with adequate skills, experience, and quality assessment expertise; one University manager with knowledge of evaluation processes; one representative of the technical-administrative staff designated by the elected members of the Academic Senate and, to emphasise the central role of the student in the QA process, two student representatives designated by the Student Council.

The University Quality Committee defines information and document flows relating to Quality Assurance with particular attention to those to and from the University Bodies, the Evaluation Board, the Joint Teaching Staff - Student Committee (*Commisione Paritetica Docenti Studenti* - CPDS), the Departments and the Degree Programmes.

In general terms, the University Quality Committee:
- promotes a culture of Quality;
- defines processes and procedures for the QA, identifies and provides the necessary tools for their implementation;
- supports the Departments in the implementation of Quality Policies and objectives;
- supports the Departments in the management of QA processes by monitoring their execution;
- promotes continuous improvement and evaluates the effectiveness of QA processes;
- organises and carries out information activities for personnel variously involved in QA in education and research;
- manages information and document flows relating to quality assurance, verifying compliance with procedures and deadlines, with particular attention to those to and from the aforementioned University Bodies, the Evaluation Board, the Joint Teaching Staff - Student Committee and the

Departments;

- interacts with the Teaching and Student Services Management Area (*Unità Organizzativa Progettazione Didattica e Assicurazione Qualità*), with the General Management Area (*Unità Organizzativa Programmazione e Controllo di Gestione*) and with the Research, Internationalisation and Third Mission Management Area (*Unità Organizzativa Monitoraggio delle Attività di Ricerca e Terza Missione*) for the acquisition of data, analyses, and evaluations to support the Government Bodies in making decisions and verifying the implementation of QA policies;
- interacts with ANVUR, Ministry of Universities and Research *(Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca - MUR)* and other public and private bodies interested in the University's Quality Assurance system;
- issues guidelines for the implementation of Quality policies and objectives.

As part of the training activities, the University Quality Committee:
- organises and verifies the continuous updating of the information contained in the Annual Degree Programme Assessment Form (*Scheda Unica Annuale del Corso di Studio* - SUA-CdS) of each Degree Programme of the University;
- supervises the execution of quality assurance procedures for teaching activities in accordance with what is planned and declared;
- administers and monitors anonymous opinion surveys for students and graduates;
- regulates and verifies the periodic review activities of the Degree Programme Annual Monitoring Form – (*Scheda di Monitoraggio Annuale* – SMA), and the Cyclical Review Report (*Rapporto di riesame Ciclico* - RRC);
- performs an advisory role towards the Governing Bodies, and advises, supports and monitors Degree Programmes and their referees for the development and implementation of improvement plans targeted towards educational activities;
- monitors the implementation of plans outlined following recommendations expressed by accrediting bodies during external visits;
- plans training activities for university staff and students in the field of Quality Assurance;
- assesses the effectiveness of improvement plans and their actual results;
- ensures the correct flow of information to and from the Evaluation Board and the Joint Teaching Staff - Student Committee.

As part of research and Third Mission activities, the University Quality Committee:
- verifies the continuous updating of the information contained in the Annual Assessment Form of Departmental Research (*Scheda Unica Annuale della Ricerca Dipartimentale* - SUA-RD) of each Department;
- supervises the execution of Quality Assurance procedures for research activities in accordance with what is planned and declared;
- performs an advisory role towards the Governing Bodies and advises, supports and monitors departments in the development of actions to improve research activities;
- plans training activities for university staff and students in the field of Quality Assurance;
- assesses the effectiveness of improvement plans and their actual results;
- ensures the correct flow of information to and from the Evaluation Board.

The University QA objectives for the following year are presented annually to the Governing Bodies

by the University Quality Committee, usually by November, to be approved by December; these objectives may be described in the University Integrated Plan.

The University Quality Committee reports annually (generally by March of each year) to the University Governing Bodies, the Director General and the Evaluation Board on the status of Quality Assurance actions, highlighting issues and points of divergence between what was planned and what has been achieved.

V. *DEPARTMENTAL QUALITY ASSURANCE*

Departments are the fundamental organisational structures in charge of carrying out scientific research, teaching and training activities, overseeing the transfer of knowledge and innovation as well as all related external activities. The Director and the Department Council are the Departmental Governing Bodies responsible for defining the Quality Assurance Policies for Departmental Research and Teaching.

A Departmental Quality Committee is set up within each department and acts as an operational and liaison body between the department and the University Quality Committee.

For each departmental structure, the composition of the Departmental Quality Committee is defined by the Departmental Operating Rules (*Regolamento di Funzionamento del Dipartimento*); the teaching and administrative component remains in office for a four-year calendar period, with the possibility of being reappointed once, while the student component is renewed every two years[1].

The Departmental Quality Committee:
- promotes a culture of Quality;
- implements the general policies and guidelines for Quality established by University governing bodies;
- assists the Presidents of individual Degree Programme Councils in the drafting of QA documents (Annual Degree Programme Assessment Form, Cyclical Review Report, Annual Monitoring Form);
- assists the Director in the drafting of research QA documents (SUA-RD, any departmental policy documents);
- supports the Director and the Department Council in defining policies and objectives for Quality and QA of research and Third Mission activities;
- promotes continuous improvement in research and teaching through self-evaluation activities and evaluates the effectiveness of any undertaken actions.

In addition, the Departmental Quality Committee, through the Departmental Teaching Delegate (*Delegato per la Didattica di Dipartimento*), as provided for in the Framework Regulation for the Functioning of Departments (*Regolamento Quadro per il Funzionamento dei Dipartimenti*), liaises with the Departmental Teaching Commission (*Commissione Didattica di Dipartimento*).

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[1] Rect. prot. no. 220666 of 31/10/2019

The Commission assists the Director in carrying out all responsibilities in teaching matters, (as provided in the 'Framework Regulation for the Functioning of Departments') through the Departmental Delegate for Research Quality and Third Mission Activities[2] (*Delegato alla Qualità della Ricerca e Terza Missione di Dipartimento*). Moreover, the Commission verifies the execution of the procedures for the drafting of the SUA-RD.

VI. *EDUCATION*

(DEGREE PROGRAMMES- REVIEW GROUP - QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGEMENT)

For the purposes of Quality Assurance, each Degree Programme (*Corso di Studio- CdS*) is required to:
- apply, within the scope of its competence, the general policies and guidelines for Quality established by the Governing Bodies;
- carry out self-assessment and review of its own training processes and of the management of the Degree Programme on the basis of the analyses reported in the annual CPDS report and of the data provided by ANVUR, the Evaluation Board and the Organisational Unit (O.U.) Management Control, and by benchmarking themselves against other CPDs;
- promote continuous improvement and value its effectiveness;
- implement teaching evaluations in accordance with the University's arrangements.

The Council of Degree Programmes, through its President, is also responsible for the information reported in the ANVUR documents (Annual Degree Programme Assessment Form, Annual Monitoring Form, Cyclic Review Report).

To this end, each Degree Programme sets up a **Review Group** (*Gruppo di Riesame*, GdR*)[3]* composed of individuals from within the Degree Programme itself, such as lecturers, technical and administrative staff, and students, who can contribute to the evaluation of the Course from various points of view. The review panel is usually made up of the President of the Degree Programme Council, its Degree Programme Quality Assurance Education Manager (*Responsabile della Assicurazione della Qualità del Corso di Studio* - RAQ), a student representative and a teaching quality manager from the Degree Programme. The teaching and administrative component remains in office for a four-year calendar period, with the possibility of being reappointed once, while the student component is renewed every two years[4]. The Review Group is tasked with guiding the Degree Programme towards continuous improvement. The Review Group manages the process of self-evaluation, i.e., the process by which the institution monitors its performance and assesses its results, in accordance with the guidelines established by ANVUR.

In the course of the self-assessment process, the Review Group examines anything that may contribute to the analysis of the results of the Degree Programme, in particular:

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[2] Established by Rect. prot. no. 28538 of 14/02/2017

[3] Rect. prot. no. 28538 of 14/02/2017

[4] Rect. prot. no. 220666 of 31/10/2019

- the annual report provided by the Joint Teaching Staff - Student Committee;
- the Cyclic Review Report;
- the Annual Monitoring Form;
- the Evaluation Board Report;
- the advancement of student careers;
- the availability of related services (tutoring, internationalisation, orientation, internships, etc.);
- ongoing dialogue with the relevant socio-economic system (including the Steering Committee, sector studies, specific meetings with social partners);
- the availability of resources (human and infrastructural);
- student opinions on teaching, organisation, and training;
- any other report provided by the Degree Programme Quality Assurance Education Manager, the Quality Education Manager and the Coordinator/Deputy Head of the Education Quality Service (see section X).

The work carried out by the Review Group leads to the compilation of an Annual Monitoring Form, which is then discussed in the Council of the Degree Programme, and to the drafting of the Cyclical Review Report, which is discussed in the relevant Council of the Degree Programme and forwarded to the University Quality Committee and the University Evaluation Board.

DEGREE PROGRAMME QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGER

The Degree Programme Quality Assurance Education Manager is in charge of monitoring and verifying the correct implementation of the improvement actions approved by the Council of the Degree Programme. The Degree Programme Quality Assurance Education Manager is identified from among the teaching staff of the Degree Programme. He/she is chosen from among the tenured teachers of the Degree Programme and remains in office for a four-year term, with the possibility of being reappointed once[5].

Specifically, the Degree Programme Quality Assurance Education Manager is responsible for:
- verifying the effectiveness of QA activities within the Degree Programme;
- working with the Review Group on the drafting of the Annual Monitoring Form and the Cyclical Review Report;
- verifying the correct publication of exam calendars, graduation sessions, lectures, and seminars;
- verifying the publication of teaching programmes, teacher curricula, etc;
- receiving and taking charge of any student reports on issues concerning teaching activities;
- raising the student component's awareness of the role and functions of the Degree Programme Quality Assurance Education Manager.

Every year (usually by October 31st), the Degree Programme Quality Assurance Education Manager submits to the Council of the Degree Programme a written report on the activities carried out during the academic year.

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[5] Rect. prot. no. 220666 of 31/10/2019

VII. *DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH AND THIRD MISSION ACTIVITIES*

According to the Statute, the Director oversees promoting, guiding and coordinating scientific activities. The Director supervises research and Third Mission activities and oversees their evaluation.

The Director is assisted by the Departmental Research Quality and Third Mission Delegate who is entrusted with the following tasks:

- providing support in defining the Department's research quality and Third Mission policies by identifying indicators that take into account both teaching efforts as well as the quality of research and technology transfer activities;
- defining the Department's research Quality Assurance and Third Mission procedures;
- performing the annual monitoring of quantitative and qualitative research results, as defined by ANVUR in the Research Quality Assessment (*Valutazione della Qualità della Ricerca* -VQR) call and the Annual Assessment Form of Department Research (*Scheda Unica Annuale della Ricerca Dipartimentale*);
- managing the Department's public engagement activities.

The Director is responsible for the information reported in the QA documents (SUA-RD and any other policy documents of the Department).

VIII. *UNIVERSITY EVALUATION BOARD*

The University Evaluation Board (*Nucleo di Valutazione di Ateneo* - NdV) is a University Body with evaluation and policy-making functions.

The competences attributed to the University Evaluation Board by the legislative regulations (specifically DL 537/93, DL 370/99 and DM 987/2016) are: the internal evaluation and formulation of guidelines/recommendations with regard to administrative management, performance cycle management, teaching and research activities, and support for the right to study. These functions also take into consideration the proper use of public resources, the impartiality and good performance of administrative action, and the productivity of teaching and research.

The University Statute entrusts the University Evaluation Board with:
- verifying the quality and effectiveness of teaching, also on the basis of the indicators identified by the Joint Teaching Staff - Student Committee;
- verifying the research activities carried out by the Departments and the adequacy of the scientific or professional curricula of contracted teachers, pursuant to Article 23(1) of Law 240/2010;
- overseeing the procedures for the evaluation of structures and personnel to promote merit and the improvement of organisational and individual performance in the University, in full autonomy and with its own organisational methods, in agreement with the activities of ANVUR, referred to in Article 14 of Legislative Decree No. 150 of 27 October 2009,
- monitoring and verifying compliance with transparency requirements.

The competences of the University Evaluation Board can be summarised as follows:

- evaluation of the University's Quality Assurance Policy, with particular reference to its consistency with European and national standards and guidelines and its compatibility with available resources;
- evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of the University's organisation of and QA for training and research;
- Evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of the QA system of Degree Programmes and Departments;
- assessment of the consistency of the University's QA policy and its compatibility with the available resources;
- evaluation of the implementation and monitoring of the QA of education and research at all structural levels within the University, with specific attention to:
  - indications and recommendations from students, graduates and staff, with reference to survey results;
  - the Annual Reports of the Joint Teaching Staff - Student Committee and of the University Evaluation Board by the University Quality Committee and the University Bodies;
  - the proposals and indications of the University Quality Committee by University Bodies, the Degree Programmes, the Departments and any Connecting Facilities (*Strutture di Raccordo*);
- evaluation of the overall effectiveness of the quality management of training and research, including the effectiveness of improvement measures;
- formulation of guidelines and recommendations aimed at improving the quality of the University's training and research activities;
- verification of the persistence of the quantitative and qualitative requirements for the initial and periodic accreditation of the Degree Programmes and Departments.

The composition of the University Evaluation Board is defined by the University Statute and is comprised of nine members: two tenured University professors, one of whom is the coordinator; five external members of high professional qualification in the field of university evaluation; and two students of the University elected by their fellow students.

The stakeholders of the University Evaluation Board are twofold:
- within the University: the governing bodies and the University Quality Committee;
- outside the University: Ministry of Universities and Research and ANVUR.

The timing and modes of communication between the Evaluation Board and its stakeholders are stipulated by current regulations and by the Annual Report. However, the University Evaluation Board must promptly notify its stakeholders should any problems emerge, even outside the regularly scheduled communication structure.

IX.   *JOINT TEACHING STAFF - STUDENT COMMITTEE*

Pursuant to the University Statute, the University Teaching Regulations and the Framework Regulations for the functioning of Departments, a Joint Teaching Staff - Student Committee (*Commissione Paritetiche Docenti/Studenti*, CPDS) is established for each Department. Each includes a teacher and a

student for every Degree Programme pertaining to the Department. If deemed necessary, the Joint Teaching Staff - Student Committee may be divided into sub-committees. It is chaired by one of the tenured professors. The teaching component remains in office for a four-year term, with the possibility of being reappointed once, while the student component is renewed every two years[6].

Teaching activities are under permanent observation by the Joint Teaching Staff - Student Committee.

The Joint Teaching Staff - Student Committee:
- monitors the range and quality of teaching activities, as well as the student service activities performed by professors and researchers within the Department;
- evaluates the consistency between the credits allocated to the training activities and the specific planned training objectives;
- identifies and monitors indicators for the evaluation of results;
- formulates opinions on the activation and abolition of Degree Programmes;
- analyses data and information relating to the educational offering and the quality of teaching;
- makes proposals to the Evaluation Board for improving the quality and effectiveness of teaching facilities;
- monitors indicators that measure the degree of achievement of teaching objectives at the level of individual facilities.

By 31 December of each year, the Joint Teaching Staff - Student Committee draws up a report in accordance with the quality assurance regulations and forwards it to the Presidents of the Degree Programme Councils pertaining to the Department, to the Department Director, to the Coordinator of the University Quality Committee and to the Coordinator of the University Evaluation Board.

X. *CHIEF ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES*

To emphasize the level of participation and contribution of all the components of the University to the quality management of teaching, research and third mission activities and services, the following are the organisational units (*Unità Organizzative* - U.O.) and managerial areas in charge of quality assurance, as reported in the "General Guidelines for the Organisation of the University" (approved by resolution of the BoD 314/30.07.2020) and in the University Functional Chart (approved by decree of the Director General no. 1613/2020 prot. 226878 of 09/11/2020) both in force as of 01/01/2021.

RECTORATE

The general/technical staff secretariat must ensure the overall coordination, from an administrative/managerial point of view, of the activities pertaining to the Rector, guaranteeing institutional relations with the staff of the General Management Area, as well as relations with every stakeholder inside and outside the University.

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[6] Rect. prot. no. 220666 of 31/10/2019

The following structural units have been established:

Organisational Unit for Internal Audit *(Unità Organizzativa Audit Interno),* tasked with guaranteeing internal control, supporting the decision-making activity of the Governing Bodies and the operational activity of the Top Bodies, analysing the strategic and operational risks of the processes, the adequacy of the solutions adopted and proposing actions to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Organisational Unit for Institutional Communication and Ceremonial (*Unità Organizzativa Comunicazione Isitutizonale e Cerimoniale),* whose main activities are to ensure the strategic control and coordination of information and institutional communication activities, with the aim of enhancing the University's brand identity, effectively managing relations with external and internal users, and realising the principles of accessibility and transparency through the use of traditional and digital media.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT AREA

General Management Area ensures the overall co-ordination, from an administrative-managerial point of view, of the activities pertaining to the Director General, guaranteeing institutional relations with the Rectorate staff, as well as relations with every stakeholder inside and outside the University.

Within the General Management Area, the following have been specifically established:

Organisational Unit for Institutional Affairs and Governing Bodies (*Unità Organizzativa Affari Istituzionali e Organi di Governo),* whose activities concern the coordination of Governing Body activities and institutional activities planned by the Governing Bodies and by the Director General. The Organisational Unit is responsible for all initiatives suitable to respond with due flexibility to the needs of the deliberative process and the functioning of the Bodies.

Organisational Unit for Corruption Prevention and Transparency (*Unità Organizzativa Anticorruzione e Trasparenza*), whose activities are aimed at supporting the Head of Corruption Prevention and Transparency in all the actions required by current anti-corruption and transparency regulations. The Organisational Unit operates in functional connection with all organisational structures to ensure the necessary coordination of actions with the National Anti-Corruption Plan, to disseminate the guidelines of the National Anti-Corruption Authority in the various areas of administrative action, and to monitor the implementation by the competent structures of the required actions, with reference to the invested companies.

Organisational Unit for Contracts and Technical Services (*Unità Organizzativa Contrattualistica Lavori e Servizi Tecnici),* tasked with ensuring unitary coordination of all the processes related to the public contracting chain for works and technical services concerning engineering and architecture, including the supply of goods and services listed as necessary for facilities operation and management.

Organisational Unit for the Coordination of Administrative Activities of the Departments and Centres (*Unità Organizzativa Coordinamento Attività Amministrative dei Dipartimenti e dei Centri),* whose activities are aimed at optimising, in terms of efficiency and effectiveness, the standards of functionality of the administrative processes and activities managed by the Departments and Centres, through administrative coordination between the organisational units of the Executive Areas and the Departments and Centres.

**Legal and Compliance Organisational Unit** (*Unità Organizzativa Legale e Compliance*), with the main

task of managing and settling disputes concerning the University of Parma, both in court and out of court; the O.U. provides legal and juridical assistance to the Academic Bodies and other University Structures.

Organisational Unit for Programming and Management Control (*Unità Organizzativa Programmazione e Controllo di Gestione),* whose activities are aimed at setting up, processing, and implementing the management control system to efficiently and cost-effectively pursue the objectives of the University's administrative actions in line with the institutional strategy. The O.U. also provides support to the Government Bodies, University Bodies, Commissions, Working Groups, as well as any other institutional University component.

Organisational Unit for Vigilance and Logistics (*Unità Organizzativa Vigilanza e Logistica)***,** whose main activities are the supervision and coordination of all the auxiliary services of the University, including building access and care, logistics activities, cleaning and pest control, and guaranteeing the vigilance and security of the University premises.

DIAGRAM OF THE LIAISON STRUCTURES BETWEEN THE CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION AND THE DEPARTMENTS AND CENTRES
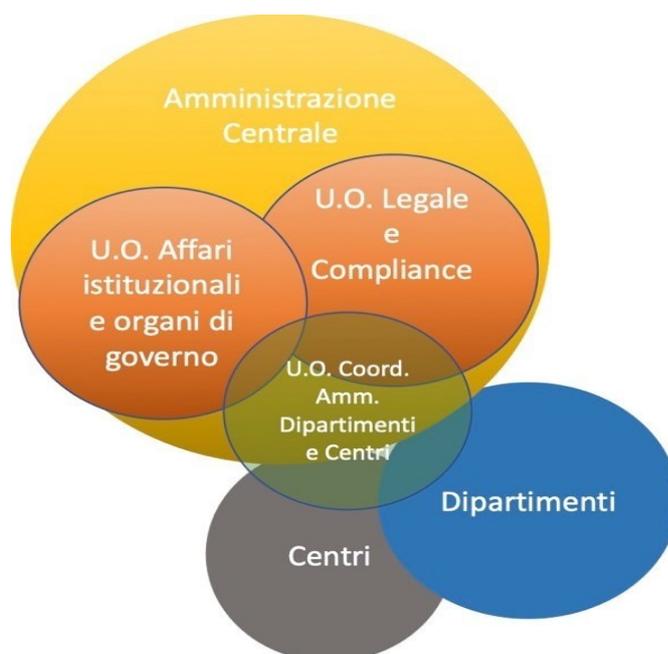
MANAGEMENT AREAS

TEACHING, INTERNATIONALISATION AND STUDENT SERVICES

With the aim of improving the student experience, the Teaching, Internationalisation and Student Services Management Area oversees all processes related to educational pathways, both within Degree Programmes and postgraduate training, and supports students in entering the job market.

This Management Area is responsible for the communication of legal and regulatory information to the offices concerned and for the coordination of resulting actions, as well as for relations with governing and control bodies.

The Management Area, furthermore, is called upon to value students placing them at the heart of its efforts. In this context, the Area oversees administrative processes aimed at ensuring the quality of education offered in the Degree Programmes and promotes the quality and efficiency of Student Services.

Within this Area, the **Organization Unis for Educational Design and Quality Assurance** (*Unità Organizzativa Progettazione Didattica e Assicurazione della Qualità*) oversees the effective performance of the planning, management, and administrative and technical coordination processes of the University's educational offer. This Area focuses on the establishment and accreditation of Degree Programmes, as well as all aspects related to the internationalisation of the educational offer. It also develops and supports the University's Quality Assurance system in accordance with national and European regulations and guidelines, seeking administrative efficiency and fostering the overall improvement of learning activities.

The functions of the Organisational Unit are:
1. Administrative support for the planning, development, and definition of the University's educational offer. This includes support for the design and redevelopment of Degree Programmes in accordance with national and international guidelines, maintaining an international perspective and developing the possibility of activating double/multiple/joint degrees;
2. Management of the processes involved in issuing and modifying University-wide and Degree Programme-specific Teaching Regulations;
3. Support for the development of the University's Teaching Quality Assurance system. This includes assistance for teaching through the use of tools for self-assessment and quality improvement and supporting the University Quality Committee, also in cooperation with national teaching management networks;
4. Coordination of Departmental activities aimed at drafting the academic calendar and at the optimisation of the use of University facilities;
5. Management of relations with ANVUR concerning University-wide and Degree Programme-specific accreditation procedures;
6. Administrative support for innovative teaching activities, with a view to the overall improvement of learning activities;
7. Monitoring the teaching load of lecturers and providing administrative support in the allocation of institutional teaching duties to teaching staff.

The Organisational Unit, in addition to performing all the aforementioned activities, provides the necessary support and cooperation to other University areas, within the scope of its expertise.

Finally, within the Educational Design and Quality Assurance Unit there is the **Quality Assurance and Support Service for the University Quality Committee** (*Servizio Assicurazione della Qualità e supporto al Presidio della Qualità di Ateneo*)**.** The Service supports the development of Quality Assurance in Teaching, assisting the University Quality Committee to ensure the quality of Degree Programmes and teaching structures, and harmonizing them with national and European guidelines on Quality Assurance, while respecting the particularities of individual Degree Programmes. The Service also seeks to promote the construction of collaboration networks for the exchange of good practices.

RESEARCH

The Research Management Area supervises the promotion, coordination, and support of the University's basic and applied research, including through the enhancement of library services and bibliographic holdings; it monitors production trends in bibliometric and non-bibliographic sectors in order to foster the improvement of quality indicators, the attraction of external resources, and the internationalisation of research endeavours.

In the exercise of its functions, it ensures the communication of legal and regulatory information to the offices concerned and the coordination of resulting actions, as well as managing relations with Governing and Control Bodies.

Within this management Area, the **Organisational Unit for the Monitoring of Research Activity** *(Unità Organizzativa monitoraggiod ella Attività di Ricerca)* coordinates and manages the monitoring and analysis of the scientific production of the University's researchers.
The functions of the Organisational Unit are:

1. Managing the functional aspects of the University Research Archive (IRIS - *Institutional Repository*) by monitoring data quality and supporting, training and updating lecturers and researchers in the use of the platform and repository activities;
2. Promoting the use and management of the functional aspects of IRIS-AP and IRIS-RM; processing and extracting statistical data useful for the planning of projects and the Third Mission activities of Departments and individual teachers;
3. Coordinating processes related to periodic research evaluation procedures in cooperation with Area Scientific Committees, Departments, and Administrative areas involved in evaluation;
4. Supporting teachers and researchers in the verification of scientific production requirements;
5. Monitoring and improving the quality of bibliographic records of scientific contributions authored by the University's teachers in the main bibliographic/bibliometric databases;
6. Designing and implementing monitoring tools for the University's scientific production, also with a view to periodically reporting on its progress.

In addition to performing all the aforementioned activities, the Organisational Unit provides the necessary support and cooperation to other University areas, within the scope of its expertise.

THIRD MISSION

The Third Mission Management Area oversees the organic and integrated management of technology transfer activities, the protection and enhancement of intellectual property and patents, and the management of collaborative relationships with local firms and public entities, with the goal of creating a favourable environment for the launching of innovative companies and start-ups. The Area promotes and monitors all activities that have educational, cultural and social relevance in order to support local community growth. It also oversees the conclusion of framework agreements.

The Area ensures the communication of legal and regulatory information to the offices concerned and the coordination of resulting actions. It also manages relations with governing and control bodies.

PERSONNEL AND ORGANISATION

The Personnel and Organisation Management Area oversees the management of all processes related to the recruitment and career advancement of University staff, including the procedures concerning the three-year and annual planning of personnel requirements, as well as trade union relations. It plans and implements training activities, fostering staff wellbeing through the pursuit of organizational efficiency and it drafts the personnel organisational model, in line with the University's strategic guidelines.

The Area ensures the communication of legal and regulatory information to the offices concerned and the coordination of resulting actions. It also manages relations with governing and control bodies.

This Area includes the **Organisational Unit for Trade Union Relations, Evaluation and Performance** (*Unità Organizzativa Relazionali sindicali, valutazione e performance*), which oversees and manages the University's trade union relations system. It develops performance models, defines the Performance Measurement and Assessment System and manages and coordinates its application phases.

The Area coordinates and manages performance cycle processes, from the allocation to the evaluation of organisational and individual objectives.

DEPARTMENTAL STRUCTURES *(Organisational Unit for DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION)*

At the departmental structure level, coordination of all administrative and management activities is performed by the Organisational Unit for Departmental Administration. The O.U. is headed by the **Service Centre Manager** (*Responsabile Amministrativo Gestionale*, RAG). Among other functions, the Service Centre Manager:

- oversees and manages administrative support for institutional teaching activities and processes relating to teaching quality, including front-office communication with students regarding the department's courses, the range of courses on offer, and the evaluation and self-evaluation of courses. Additionally, the Service Centre Manager oversees processes relating to the accreditation and quality of Degree Programmes and supports and assists the Presidents of individual Degree Programme Councils in functional coordination with the Teaching Area;
- oversees and manages activities connected to administrative support for institutional research and Third Mission activities, including technology transfer, research grants, research scholarships, and overseeing departmental Research and Third Mission quality processes.

In the area of Teaching, according to the University function chart, the Service Centre Manager can call upon the aid of an **Educational Quality Service Coordinator** (*Coordinatore del servizio per la qualità della didattica*) (Cat. EP), who co-manages all activities supporting teaching, the educational offer, front-office communication with students, and Degree Programmes quality, including doctoral programs. The Educational Quality Service Coordinator manages the department's teaching contacts; oversees incoming and outgoing orientation initiatives; coordinates admission processes and manages activities related to tutoring services and graduation; supports the Presidents of individual Degree Programme Councils, the Joint Teaching Staff - Student Committee and the Review Group of the Degree Programmes in the Department. The Educational Quality Service Coordinator coordinates activities relating to internships,

placements and international mobility, performs functional staff coordination and operates in connection with the Teaching Area.

Alternatively, the Service Centre Manager may employ an **Educational Quality Service Manager** (*Responsabile del servizio per la qualità della didattica*) (Cat. D) who ensures, under the coordination of the Service Centre Manager, the supervision of all teaching support activities as outlined above and coordinates the Department's Quality Education Managers.

The organisational structure of teaching management requires that each Course of Study is administratively supported by a **Quality Education Manager** (*Manager per la Qualità della Didattica - MQD*) (Cat. D, C, B). The Quality Education Manager guarantees the organisation and functionality of educational quality within the study course. In functional coordination with the Educational Quality Manager, the Quality Education Manager guarantees administrative support for everything concerning the organisation and operation of the Degree Programmes, manages and updates the contents of the Degree Programme website in cooperation with the competent areas, and acts as a facilitator of the educational process, providing the necessary administrative support, also in functional liaison with the Teaching Area.

As a member of the Governing Board, the Quality Education Manager plays an essential leading role for the teaching organisation and is a professional figure of particular value for the Quality Assurance of Degree Programmes.

In the area of Research and Third Mission, according to the University's function chart, the Service Centre Manager can call upon the assistance of a **Research and Third Mission Service Coordinator** (*Coordinatore del servizio per la ricerca e la terza missione*) (Cat. EP), who co-manages all support activities for research (national and international), the Third Mission, research quality, and the enhancement of departmental know-how, performing interface and liaison functions with the department's technical staff.

The Research and Third Mission Service Coordinator coordinates and oversees the support processes related to the proper execution of the department's research-related activities, including: participation in calls for proposals, management of research projects (including third-party research), support in the preparation of research contracts, and reporting on all national and international projects and contracts.

The Coordinator supports the drafting of the Annual Assessment Form fof Department Research, performs functional staff coordination, and operates in connection with the Research Area.

Alternatively, the Service Centre Manager may employ a **Research and Third Mission Service Manager** (*Responsabile del servizio pre la ricercar e terza missione*) (Cat. D), who guarantees, under the coordination of the Service Centre Manager, the supervision of all typical research and third mission support activities as outlined above.

The organisational structure for research and third mission management includes in-house contact persons for the research and Third Mission service (Cat. D, C, B).

XI. GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

ANVUR   National Agency for the Evaluation of Universities and Research Institutes *(Agenzia Nazionale per la Valutazione delle Università e della Ricerca)*

AVA   Self-Assessment, Periodic Evaluation, Accreditation (*Autovalutazione, Valutazione periodica, Accreditamento)*

CdS   Degree Programme *(Corso di Studio)*

CPDS   Joint Teaching Staff - Student Committee (*Commisione Paritetica Docenti Studenti)*

GdR   Review Group *(Gruppo di Riesame*)

MQD   Quality Education Manager (*Manager per la Qualità della Didattica)*

MUR   Ministry of Universities and Research *(Ministero dell'Università e della Ricerca)*

NdV   University Evaluation Board (*Nucleo di Valutazione*)

PQA   University Quality Committee (*Presidio della Qualità di Ateneo*)

PQD   Departmental Quality Committee (*Presidio della Qualità di Dipartimento*)

QA   Quality Assurance *(Assicurazione della Qualità)*

RAG   Service Centre Manager (*Responsabile Amministrativo Gestionale*)

RAQ   Degree Programme Quality Assurance Education Manager (*Responsabile della Assicurazione della Qualità del Corso di Studio)*

RRC   Cyclical Review Report *(Rapporto di riesame Ciclico)*

SMA   Degree Programme Annual Monitoring Form - (*Scheda di Monitoraggio Annuale*)

SUA-CdS   Annual Degree Programme Assessment Form (*Scheda Unica Annuale del Corso di Studio*)

SUA-RD   Annual Assessment Form of Departmental Research (*Scheda Unica Annuale della Ricerca Dipartimentale*)

U.O.   Organisational Unit *(Unità Organizzativa)*

VQR   Research Quality Assessment (*Valutazione della Qualità della Ricerca*)