



**UNIVERSITÀ
DI PARMA**

University Quality Policies

Approved by the Academic Senate and the Board of Directors in the sessions of
December 17, 2024



Introduction

The University of Parma herewith updates its Quality Policy Document, initially approved by the Governing Bodies in July 2014 and subsequently modified in March 2017 and July 2018, to realign its priorities with the vision of the new Rector of the University, in office from 1 November 2023. The Document takes into account the principles expressed by Law 240/2010 and subsequent decrees, explained in the ANVUR Guidelines for the periodic accreditation of Universities and Study Courses, with the aim of improving the organization of the University and strengthening the quality assurance underlying the services provided to students and all stakeholders of the University.

The policies included in the Document, which aim to achieve the University's vision of Quality in the four Missions identified within the Rector's Mandate Plan for the six-year period 2023-2029 and the University's Strategic Plan approved by the Governing Bodies in June 2024, concern:

- **Research;**
- **Teaching and Student Services;**
- **Societal;**
- **People, Assets and Resources.**

They represent a point of reference and, at the same time, a stimulus towards improvement for all University structures, providing a close connection with the three-year objectives of the Departments, which have consolidated a path of improvement for the programming, monitoring and evaluation processes of their activities, consistent with the prerogatives of Quality Assurance (QA).

The guiding principle of the Document is to set out the quality policies identified for the stated period by the Rector and the relevant Vice-Rectors, with concrete objectives which translate into strategic and organizational actions for the Institution, for the people who work and study there, for the social and economic context in which the University operates, as they have been incorporated into the Strategic Plan and set out in the Integrated Plan which finds its point of reference in the Performance Measurement and Evaluation System.

These policies have led to the definition, in the Strategic Plan and in the Integrated Plan, of the actions necessary for their implementation which have been defined by establishing responsibilities, schedules, indicators and targets.

The principles and objectives of the University Quality Policy are promoted and implemented by the Governing Bodies and reference structures, and it is to them which all the mechanisms and procedures guiding the activities towards achieving the quality objectives refer to. In accordance with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* (ESG) and the accreditation requirements of the AVA (Self-assessment, Evaluation, Accreditation) system provided for by current legislation, the Quality Assurance Committee promotes their implementation and monitors the QA processes, while the Evaluation Unit has the role of verifying the functioning, the actions undertaken and the results achieved by the system.

In the University of Parma Quality Assurance system, Departmental Quality Assurance Committees are established within each Department, as operational and coordination bodies between Departments and the University Quality Assurance Committee, with the aim of



spreading the culture of Quality, applying to the extent of its competence, those policies and general guidelines for Quality established by the University Governing Bodies, assisting the Presidents of the Degree Course Councils in drafting the QA documents of the Degree Course, assisting the Department Directors in drafting the QA documents of research, supporting the Department Directors and Councils in defining the policies and objectives for Quality and for the QA of research and the Third Mission, as well as promoting continuous improvement in Research and Teaching through activities of self-assessment of the effectiveness of the actions undertaken.

The following paragraphs illustrate the quality policies for the missions of Research, Teaching and Student Services, Societal, People, Assets and Resources which the University of Parma has developed taking into consideration, in a pervasive way towards each of the missions identified, the six guidelines which must permeate the actions of individuals within the University: innovation, interdisciplinarity, inclusion and equity, internationalization, sustainability, social responsibility. The final part of this document presents a paragraph relating to the Policies for the Quality Assurance of the University with the objective of strengthening the quality assurance underlying the services provided to students and all stakeholders of the University.

Research Quality Policies

The University places among its priority objectives Research Quality via a continuous qualitative improvement with reference to scientific production and other research results, and therefore undertakes to support research groups at regional, national and international levels, creating a stimulating and innovative research environment.

The main policies for Research Quality are:

- ✓ develop and implement actions aimed at encouraging participation in competitive calls for international funding;
- ✓ develop and implement actions to promote the quality of international project proposals, including interdisciplinary ones;
- ✓ improve the management and reporting of international projects;
- ✓ systematically improve the quality of doctoral colleges;
- ✓ improve the productivity and quality of research of doctoral students;
- ✓ promote doctoral schools and courses in national and international contexts, also exploiting the context of the EU GREEN network;
- ✓ increase the involvement of companies in identifying training paths for PhDs;
- ✓ enhance the role of PhDs in the productive world and in public administration;
- ✓ promote international mobility opportunities for PhD students;
- ✓ consolidate the University's PNRR initiatives in a sustainable way;
- ✓ support the research activity of Departments and Interdepartmental Research Centers, including strategic-structural investments for this purpose, and the maximization of the sharing of existing scientific instruments;
- ✓ create better conditions for participation in calls for proposals of national importance;
- ✓ ensure financial support for basic research;
- ✓ promote the interdisciplinary aspects of basic research;



- ✓ improve the quality of University research;

Teaching and Student Services Quality Policies

The University places among its priority objectives the Quality of Teaching and Student Services via the continuous qualitative improvement of its training activity, and is therefore committed to maintaining a teaching environment focused on students, capable of allowing them to regularly follow their training path and obtain quality learning results, in accordance with the learning outcomes identified by the study courses based on the demand for training coming from the world of work and professions, as well as from the economic, political and social community, as well as to acquire awareness of their future role in the work context and in society, supporting their personal development in a stimulating and innovative learning environment. Furthermore, the University intends to further qualify the services to students (and among these, in particular, orientation services for new admissions, periods of study, and departure) in a project of integral, permanent and "kind" training to the person, as well as to strengthen the spirit of belonging and cohesion of our student community and the promotion of the University through a vision of Parma as a university city as well as a European city, with mutual benefit for the University and its stakeholders.

The main policies for the Quality of Teaching are:

- ✓ create recognized study opportunities along the educational path of students in the form of joint degrees, double degrees, internships abroad;
- ✓ promote mixed mobility educational paths for students, designed together with international partner universities;
- ✓ encourage participation in language training for students;
- ✓ strengthen administrative capacities to support the management of international mobility;
- ✓ identify key teachings, within the individual Study Courses, that can include learning objectives and training activities of international and intercultural scope to be included in the study plans;
- ✓ develop projects and opportunities for advanced training (post-graduate) of international value;
- ✓ enhance and promote participation in international exchange programs aimed at students;
- ✓ upgrade the existing training offer with a view to the sustainability of the study courses, with particular reference to master's degrees;
- ✓ develop a new interdisciplinary and international training offer that also benefits from participation in the "EU Green" Network and the "Edunext" Digital Education Hub;
- ✓ strengthen the offer of digital programs dedicated to university students, professionals and businesses with inclusion objectives with respect to multiple needs/abilities;
- ✓ activate inter-university educational programs and degree courses through the exchange and sharing of teachings among universities;
- ✓ develop projects related to lifelong learning;



- ✓ consolidate the educational offer in the field of development and strengthening of transversal skills (soft skills);
- ✓ upgrade and strengthen incoming orientation activities, with particular attention to the promotion of master's degree courses;
- ✓ upgrade reception services for out-of-town students and for European and international students;
- ✓ upgrade orientation and support services for students who intend to undertake a mobility path abroad;
- ✓ upgrade and strengthen ongoing orientation activities, with particular attention to reducing dropouts;
- ✓ develop a system for monitoring and modulating tuition, to guarantee the right to study for economically disadvantaged groups;
- ✓ map and upgrade the management of curricular internships;
- ✓ upgrade and strengthen outgoing orientation and job placement activities, also through agreements for apprenticeship and training and work contracts;
- ✓ promote, implement and strengthen communication, also in English, of cultural, artistic, sports and linguistic services made available by the University;
- ✓ develop a synergic system for communication, also in English, of territorial services and for the use and enhancement of services and spaces made available by the Municipality of Parma;
- ✓ further develop the system of services offered to students in the field of mobility and housing policies.

Societal Quality Policies

The University places among its priority objective the Quality of the Societal Mission, understood as a Third Mission and Social Impact activity, its continuous qualitative improvement, and is therefore committed to supporting technology transfer initiatives and Public Engagement activities to constitute a point of reference for local businesses and societal in order to become a privileged stakeholder also at a national level.

In this regard, the main policies for the Quality of the Societal Mission are:

- ✓ integrate and expand the University's public engagement offer, encouraging the involvement of the main stakeholders also with specific reference to student associations;
- ✓ maximize the potential of museums, archives, and library structures; rendering them more attractive and useful;
- ✓ promote awareness of the role of research in society, also through citizen science projects;
- ✓ optimize the communication and valorization potential of third mission events and projects;
- ✓ progressively reduce the environmental and climate impact of the University, reducing energy and water consumption, climate-altering emissions and waste production, promoting recycling and reuse;



- ✓ carry out cultural initiatives aimed at raising awareness and actively involving citizens on the issues of sustainable development;
- ✓ ensure collaboration with the administrative, associative and productive entities of the territory on the issues of sustainable development and the fight against climate change, also benefiting from the exchanges activated within the EU GREEN Alliance;
- ✓ adequately and systematically communicate the results achieved, thus contributing to enhancing the territorial path towards climate neutrality;
- ✓ ensure the operational effectiveness of the Coordination Table of the University's Social Justice Actions (TAGSO), both as a forum for synthesis and innovative planning for the University's internal realities and as a tool for creating operational synergies with the world of volunteering;
- ✓ continue the growth path of the University Penitentiary Center (PUP-PR);
- ✓ strengthen the support actions for the vulnerable groups (DSA, BES, Caregiver) and those with refugee status, as well as monitoring and support actions for the management of contingent critical issues (temporarily vulnerable groups due to didactic, psychological, linguistic critical issues);
- ✓ strengthen the planning of initiatives supporting refugees;
- ✓ strengthen the planning of initiatives for international cooperation;
- ✓ implement a systematic action to raise awareness among citizens on issues of social justice, through public engagement events;
- ✓ strengthen coordination in the planning of university staff integrated in care activities;
- ✓ strengthen and qualify the structures dedicated to interns and doctors in specialist training;
- ✓ promote and support the competitiveness and impact on society of preclinical and clinical research;
- ✓ increase initiatives to stimulate technology transfer and entrepreneurship;
- ✓ increase support for teaching and research staff towards the protection of intellectual property;
- ✓ create initiatives to support academic entrepreneurship in the social field;
- ✓ create initiatives to support stable collaboration between universities and businesses for the promotion of innovation;
encourage listening, discussion and synergies with stakeholders;
- ✓ strengthen institutional communication through innovative channels;
- ✓ improve the dissemination of information through the University web portal.

Quality Policy for People, Assets, and Resources

The University of Parma recognizes that it is part of an independent community of individuals who prioritize reciprocal respect and helping each of its members reach their full potential. It seems of paramount importance to consider of the quality of the individuals present within the University by establishing clear and shared competence profiles that are able to facilitate the achievement of objectives and favor the motivation and capacities of the individuals themselves, primarily through the activation of targeted training programs and the



reinforcement of policies concerning organizational well-being, life-work balance, and company welfare, setting out the objective of promoting the professional qualities of the teaching and technical-administrative staff. This must all be carried out through the innovation and digitalization of processes to create a modern administration that is appropriate for the times and the needs of its users, improving and systematizing the activities of planning, programming, and follow-up. The University also sets out the objective of reinforcing the publishing and infrastructural abilities within the community by activating, on the one hand, student residence policies and, on the other hand, implementing urgent actions with the aim of increase the availability of classrooms and study spaces.

The main policies for the Quality of the Mission concerning People, Assets, and Resources are therefore as follows:

- ✓ disseminate the culture of evaluation and reward;
- ✓ implement initiatives to support more agile working methods and the staff's digital skills, as well as the development organizational and self-management abilities;
- ✓ disseminate the culture of safety and prevention, as well as the active management of the same;
- ✓ define useful actions to promote gender equality and equal opportunities;
- ✓ promote the staff's access to social, cultural, and athletic services;
- ✓ analyze, optimize, and innovate administrative processes in order to make them more effective and efficient;
- ✓ identify information technology solutions that can promote efficiency and the digitalization of administrative processes;
- ✓ activate student residence policies that actively involve the whole area;
- ✓ promote innovative models for student participation in the management of the residential assets in use at the university;
- ✓ promote the provision of spaces for the staff and classrooms for teaching that meet the needs of new innovative didactic strategies;
- ✓ promote policies of constant improvement of ordinary and extraordinary maintenance activities in the building assets, also in order to improve the well-being for all of those who experience the University's spaces;
- ✓ continue in the activity of creating infrastructure that is appropriate the host scientific equipment, also that acquired through PNRR funding, in order to increase research potential;
- ✓ create "widespread spaces" in the city for students to use for studying and socializing;
- ✓ guarantee and economic-financial plan that can ensure the maintenance of a balanced budget in a policy of sustainable development over time;
- ✓ optimize economic-financial procedures and indicators;
- ✓ strengthen and systematize the management system of the University;
- ✓ ensure the application and constant monitoring of QA models in the University;
- ✓ disseminate the culture of legality and transparency;



- ✓ improve the services that support the welcoming of high-profile teaching staff and researchers;
- ✓ introduce measures that stimulate the national and international prestige of the University;
- ✓ activate and incentivize training programs and rewards for teaching staff on innovative didactics, also benefiting opportunities related to the EU Green network and, more generally, international relations;
- ✓ give value to and promote participation in international exchange programs for teaching and technical-administrative staff;
- ✓ incentivize participation in language education for teaching and technical-administrative staff;
- ✓ ensure the promotion of professional development through the increase and personalization of training and continuing education courses.

Quality Assurance Policies

The University of Parma directs its activities towards a strong sense of self-evaluation in order to identify areas of improvement for the University and increase its reputation and positioning, taking inspiration from the Quality Assurance models defined at the European and national levels in order to pursue its mission of creating, giving value to, and disseminating knowledge to generate opportunities for social, cultural, and economic development.

In order to plan, implement, and supervise activities, the University of Parma therefore creates its Quality Assurance principles in the spirit of continuous improvement in the area of Self-evaluation, Evaluation, and Accreditation, with the aim of improving the quality of didactics, research, third mission/social impact, and services targeted at providing value to individuals, assets, and resources, as well as other institutional and management activities, through the application of a QA model based on internal planning, management, self-evaluation, and improvement procedures for training and scientific activities, through:

- the implementation and maintenance of a Quality Assurance model by the didactic, research, and service-oriented structures, which includes procedures, roles, and responsibilities concerning quality of training and research at the Center, Department, Course of Study, and Doctoral program levels;
- participation in and contribution to quality management of didactic, research, and third mission/social impact activities as well as services whose aim is to give value to individuals, assets, and resources, by all members of the University;
- systematic collection of data and information regarding the activities carried out, the objectives pursued, the resources used, and the level of satisfaction of students, teaching staff, and technical-administrative staff;
- the adoption of accountability and transparency tools that allow the interested parties to continuously monitor the activities and results achieved;
- the adoption of an organizational structure and operating mechanisms (with particular reference to information technology systems, the means of defining and establishing



objectives, internal training, meritocratic criteria for recruitment and evaluation of staff, systems for checking and monitoring results and performance, and the reward system) that make it possible to carry out activities planned for the implementation of the quality vision, also through the optimization of the human and equipment resources with regards to the external needs and development plans of the departments;

- periodic re-examination of current QA policies to evaluate whether they are updated and reaching their objectives;
- continuous improvement of communication, both internal and external, as a fundamental tool for participation, transparency, and monitoring by employees and the interested parties.

Specifically, with regards to the Quality Assurance of teaching, the University undertakes the implement and maintain the following processes in a systematic manner:

- regularly consult the professional and working world regarding the evolution of requirements for training, quality of the educational services offered, and work mentoring activities;
- provide educational offerings that identifies appropriate learning objectives for the cultural development of students, the needs of the working world, and external interests, which takes into account a necessary reflection on the contents, sets out objective means of checking for achievement of learning goals, and is sustainable with regards to the human and material resources available;
- implement orientation processes upon matriculation of new students to enable them to make informed and conscious choices, which limit failure with regards to their future choices;
- implement orientation measures during study courses with the possibility of re-orienting choices, supporting candidates who are weaker according to social equality principles, monitoring possible didactic issues of the various courses, and implementing targeted support programs for small groups or with individual mentors;
- implement orientation processes for graduating students to enable them to join the working world in a manner consistent with their wishes and potential;
- promote the informed participation of students in collegiate bodies that provide for their participation, soliciting the various stakeholders in the QA system to involve them in their activities related to improving didactic offerings;
- check the perceived efficacy of educational programs through analysis of student satisfaction questionnaires in order to identify the problems raised, analyze their causes, and identify appropriate solutions;
- promote, through targeted training activities and mentoring, a culture of quality among those responsible for Didactic QA, making available the materials and support necessary and committing to disseminating best practices;
- disseminate, through the University portal, useful, complete, and updated information regarding educational offerings.



With regards to Quality Assurance of Research and Third Mission/Social Impact, the University undertakes to implement and maintain the following processes in a systematic manner:

- ensure that its staff and students adhere to solid ethical principles when carrying out research and when publishing its results;
- optimize the management of Research and Third Mission/Social Impact activities based on the needs of the researchers and the administration, checking the functioning, usefulness, and simplification of both existing and new procedures with all of the interested parties;
- promote, through targeted educational programs and mentoring services, a culture of quality among those responsible for Research and Third Mission/Social Impact programs by making available the materials and support necessary and committing to disseminating best practices;
- disseminate, through the University websites, useful, complete, and updated information on Research results and Third Mission/Social Impact activities.

The task of evaluating compliance with these directives is entrusted to the University's Evaluation Center, while the Quality Assurance Committee monitors their implementation and ensures the support necessary for the Quality Assurance policy to be implemented through the adoption of appropriate organizational processes.

The structure of the University of Parma's Quality Assurance system¹ and the University's annual Quality Assurance objectives², which derive from these directives, are made available to all interested parties in the documents present on the website dedicated to University QA (<https://www.unipr.it/en/AQ>).

The Rector
Paolo Martelli

Signed digitally pursuant to Legislative Decree no. 82/2005

The Director General
Candeloro Bellantoni

Signed digitally pursuant to Legislative Decree no. 82/2005

¹ https://www.unipr.it/sites/default/files/2025-04/Architettura%20Sistema%20AQ%20di%20Ateneo_ENG.pdf

² <https://www.unipr.it/www.unipr.it/AQ/architetturaAQ/obiettivi>