

# QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

May 2024 – June 2025

(Approved at the meeting held on 10 September 2025)



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The documents produced by the Quality Enhancement Committee are available at the following links:

<https://www.imtlucca.it/en/quality-assurance-documents>

[https://www.imt.it/amministrazione-trasparente/trasparenza:altri contenuti:altri contenuti -  
dati ulteriori:relazioni assicurazione qualita](https://www.imt.it/amministrazione-trasparente/trasparenza:altri_contenuti:altri_contenuti_-_dati_ulteriori:relazioni_assicurazione_qualita)

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# 1. PREAMBLE

According to the provisions of the [“Regulations for the Operation of the Quality Enhancement Committee”](#), Article 4, paragraph 3, the [Quality Enhancement Committee](#) (QEC) – referred to as “Presidio della Qualità” or PQ in Italian – of the IMT School (hereinafter also referred to as the “School”) *produces an Annual Report on the accounting and planning of the activities for the following year. The Report is sent to the Rector, to the General Director, to the Academic Senate, to the Board of Governors, to the Assessment Board (AB) and to the Joint Students and Teachers Board (JSTB) and published on the School’s website.*

It should be noted that this Report covers a 14-month period (from May 2024 to June 2025), unlike previous Annual Reports, which covered the May-April period.

The decision to move the reference time horizon to mid-year is aimed at making monitoring the status of the Quality Assurance (QA) system and the degree of implementation of actions more effective and making the Report more informative for review purposes.

## 1.1. MEMBERSHIP OF THE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

With the Rectoral Decree no. 19891(456) of 14 November 2024, the composition of the QEC from 14 November 2024 to 31 October 2027 was defined.

The members in office at the time of drafting this Report are:

- Prof. Massimo Riccaboni, Full Professor, Vice-Rector of Organisation, Planning and Budgeting, serving as President;
- Prof. Andrea Averardi, Associate Professor;
- Prof. Ennio Bilancini, Full Professor;
- Prof. Mario Zanon, Associate Professor;
- Giada Lettieri, researcher;
- Gianpietro Sgaramella, student in the XXXIX PhD Programme cycle in Economics, Analytics and Decision Sciences<sup>1</sup>;
- Valentina Calvi, Technical and administrative staff;
- Caterina Tangheroni, Technical and administrative staff.

## 1.2. PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL REPORT

The Report, drawn up annually by the QEC, has the following purposes:

- presenting the status of the School’s QA system, monitoring the related activities;
- verifying the degree of implementation of quality support actions;
- reporting on the actions implemented by the QEC;
- illustrating the main issues that the QEC deems necessary to address in the coming year and the areas for improvement identified.

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<sup>1</sup> Two-year term of office expiring on 31 October 2026.

The Report therefore represents a communication tool of key importance to promote collaboration between the various actors of the QA system and the entire School community. The Report also constitutes one of the inputs to the annual review process of the Governance system and of the QA system.

## 2. THE ROLE AND ACTIONS OF THE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

The evolution of the Self-assessment – Evaluation – Accreditation system has led Quality Enhancement Committees to play an increasingly important role within their respective universities over the years. The AVA2 model, in fact, validated the figure of the QEC, including its existence among the requirements for Accreditation, while the [AVA3](#) model strengthened its role with the aim of eliminating the separation between the Governance system and the QA system.

The section of the [Three-year planning document 2025-2027](#) dedicated to the QA-focused strategic objectives fits precisely into this framework, defining quality and continuous improvement as the principles that have guided and continue to guide the growth of the School and attesting to the consolidation of the role of the QEC within it.

### 2.1. REVIEW OF THE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

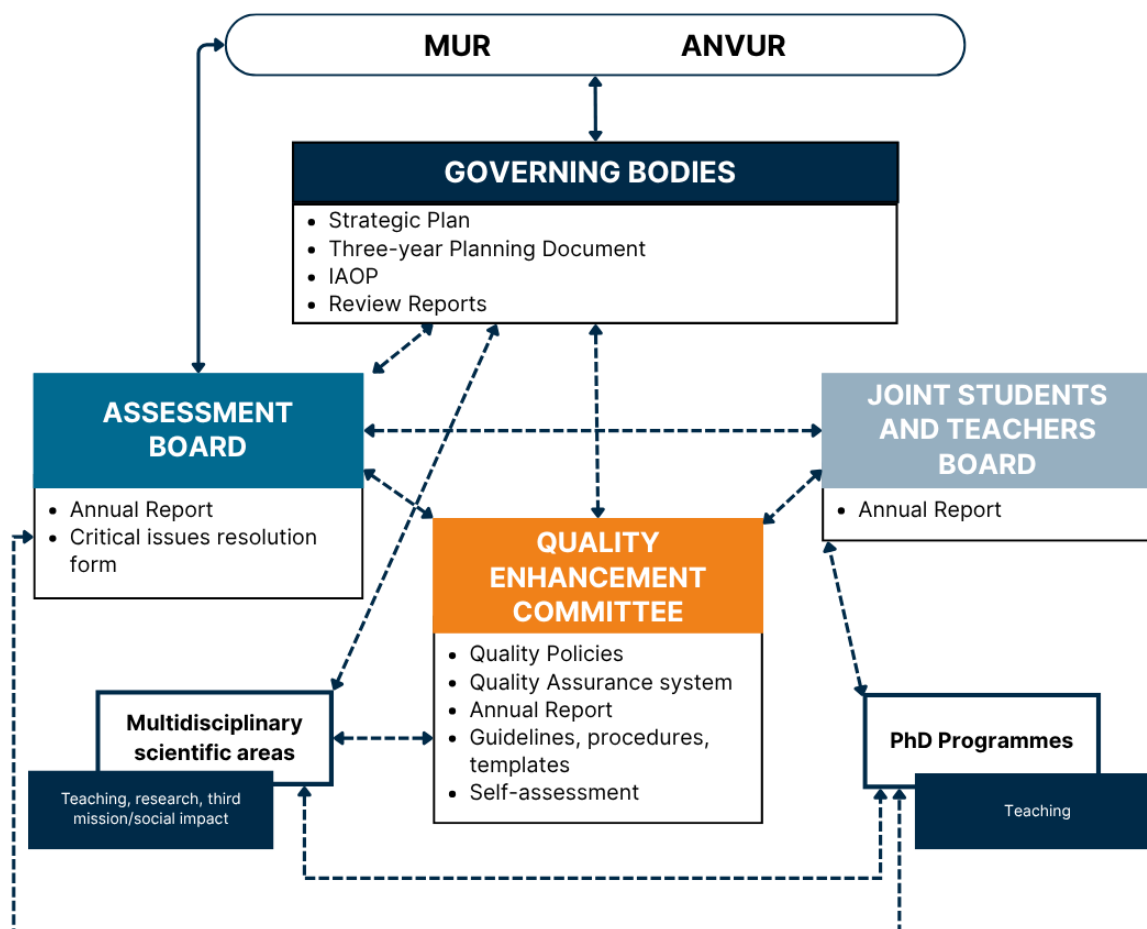
The School's QA system has evolved over the years in light of the changes introduced by the AVA3 model, the School's growth in terms of staff, activities and structures, as well as of internal changes. This evolution, as already highlighted in the previous Report, has not, however, been formally reflected in an update of key QA documents, which reflect the situation in 2019, the year of their adoption.

To address this misalignment, starting in January 2025, the QEC has undertaken a systematic review of these documents according to a specific timetable, starting with "Quality Policies" and "The Quality Assurance system".

The first document, approved by the QEC at its meeting held on 7 March 2025, outlines the general principles that inspire the IMT School, which are implemented through a cyclical process aimed at continuous improvement, and the policies dedicated to the School's specific areas of activity (teaching, research, third mission, environment and services).

The second, approved by the QEC at the meeting held on 6 May 2025, illustrates the School's QA system, explaining the main players and their responsibilities, processes and activities.

Compared to the versions adopted in 2019, the updated documents consider the provisions of the AVA3 model and are aligned with the School's new strategic directions and the changed internal structure.



**Figure 1.** Architecture of the IMT School's QA system. In addition to the main actors involved in the QA system, the figure illustrates the information and communication flows that ensure the correct functioning of the QA system and regulate the relationships between the various actors.

The review of the documentation then concerned “The system for collecting students’ opinions and their satisfaction” and “Questionnaires for collecting students’ opinions: Guidelines for the distribution and management of results”. Respectively renamed “The system for collecting students’ opinions” and “Guidelines for the distribution and management of the results of questionnaires for collecting students’ opinions”, the two documents, which are part of the educational QA sphere, have been the subject of a thorough revision by virtue of the changes to the system for collecting opinions through questionnaires already illustrated in previous Reports. Although officially outside the time frame of reference of this Report, it should be noted that these two documents were officially approved by the QEC during the meeting held on 7 July 2025.

After being submitted to the attention of the Review Working Group<sup>2</sup>, “[The quality policies](#)”, “[The quality assurance system](#)” and “[The system for collecting students’ opinions](#)” were approved by the Board of Governors, having consulted with the Academic Senate on the matter, during the meeting held on 23 July 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Appointed with the Rectoral Decree no. 5787 (145) of 7 April 2025, the Review Working Group, which includes three members of the QEC, is responsible for overseeing the review of the Governance system and of the QA system.

## 2.2. UPDATE OF THE “REGULATIONS FOR THE OPERATION OF THE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE”

Having recognised the need to include, in the “Regulations for the operation of the Quality Enhancement Committee”, a reference to the obligation of confidentiality regarding facts and documents that its members become aware of by virtue of their role, as well as to formalise certain long-standing practices, the QEC has implemented a general revision of the text, aligning it with the most recent statutory amendment and using language that is sensitive to gender differences.

Specifically, the revision of the Regulations in question has formalised both the practice of consulting the student community in order to identify the student component in the QEC, and that of sharing the minutes with the Assessment Board (AB) and with the Joint Students and Teachers Board (JSTB). Moreover, it defined the person responsible for chairing the meetings in the absence of the President and introduced the publication of the resolutions adopted by the QEC on the School’s Intranet following each meeting.

Approved by the QEC during the meeting held on 20 June 2024, the new version of the [“Regulations for the operation of the Quality Enhancement Committee”](#) was approved by the Board of Governors in the meeting held on 23 July 2024, having acquired the opinion of the Academic Senate on the matter, and was then issued with Rectoral Decree no. 14274(324) of 31 July 2024.

## 2.3. THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE JOINT STUDENTS AND TEACHERS BOARD AND THE ASSESSMENT BOARD

In carrying out its role within the QA system, the QEC interfaces systematically with the AB and the JSTB and ensures the correct flow of information to and from these two actors.

An overview of the main activities that involved the QEC in relation to the AB and/or the JSTB in the period covered by this Report is presented below:

- the **third joint meeting of the bodies responsible for QA**, which was held on 24 September 2024 at School premises. During the meeting, members of the QEC, the AB and the JSTB discussed the outcomes of the PhD programmes audits conducted by the AB, the “Guidelines for the review of PhD programmes”, possible training initiatives on innovative teaching for teaching and research staff, as well as the management methods of study spaces available to the student community;
- **participation in the definition of the [“Regulations for the operation of the Joint Students and Teachers Board”](#)**, issued with Rectoral Decree no. 14280(325) of 31 July 2024 and subsequently amended with Rectoral Decree no. 1584(37) of 3 February 2025, which replaced the “Guidelines for the Joint Students and Teachers Board” dating back to 2020;
- the verification, as per consolidated practice, of the preliminary version of the 2024 JSTB Annual Report and the transmission of suggestions and comments which were subsequently accepted and integrated by the latter;
- the dialogue with the JSTB for the purpose of **preparing a handbook**, i.e. a short supporting document for the student community in which to provide answers to the most common questions;
- the direction of the JSTB’s activities, in particular with the invitation to organise training initiatives on QA for the student community and to meet regularly with the PhD programmes representatives to directly receive eventual reports from the same.



Moreover, it should be noted that, as of September 2024, with the aim of ensuring maximum transparency in the activities of the bodies responsible for QA and in compliance with the provisions of the regulations for the operation of the QEC, the AB and the JSTB in the most recent version, the agendas and minutes of the QEC, JSTB and AB meetings will be accessible to the entire IMT Community. In line with the practices already adopted for the Academic Senate and the Board of Governors, the link to access this documentation is available on the School's Intranet.

### 3. EDUCATIONAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

Continuing its periodic review and improvement work of the educational QA system, during the period covered by this Report, the QEC defined the “Guidelines for the review of PhD programmes” and monitored their implementation, initiated an analysis on the introduction of training initiatives on the topic of innovative teaching aimed at teaching and research staff, and promoted the optimisation of the questionnaire distribution process and the management of the related data.

#### 3.1. PHD PROGRAMMES REVIEW PROCEDURE

The AVA3 model explicitly refers to the periodic review of PhD programmes, with the following aspects to be taken into consideration:

*C.1.1 The University ensures periodic review of the activities of the Degree Programmes, PhD Programmes and Departments through analysis and evaluation tools made available by the Quality Enhancement Committee*

*D.PHD.3.3 The PhD programme periodically reviews and updates the educational and research offerings made available to PhD students, to align them with the cultural and scientific development of the scientific areas of reference of the PhD, also taking into account international best practices, feedback from stakeholders (internal and external) and the opinions and proposals for improvement of PhD students.*

As already explained in the previous Report, having identified the need to standardise the review process for PhD programmes, at the beginning of 2024 the QEC began work aimed at adopting specific Guidelines. The Working Group, established at the QEC's discretion, oversaw the definition of the document, regularly discussing the latter with the QEC and the Vice-Rector for Teaching and Information Services appointed at the time and incorporating their suggestions.

A first version of the “Guidelines for the review of PhD programmes”, approved by the QEC was presented to the JSTB during the meeting held on 28 June 2024, while the document finalised by the QEC was discussed during the joint meeting held on 24 September 2024. Following the positive opinion of the QEC, the AB and the JSTB, the “Guidelines for the review of PhD programmes” were approved by the Academic Senate during the meeting held on 24 October 2024.

In line with the provisions of the AVA3 model, the document defines the phases, activities and timelines of the process, as well as the subjects involved.

It is important to note that, to encourage the involvement of the student community in the review process, the Guidelines provide for the role of a PhD programme representative, in other words of a spokesperson who, when necessary, can interface with the Coordinator, with the Teaching Staff/Faculty Board and with

the JSTB to report key issues, complaints or suggestions for improvement from students enrolled in the programme in question.

In June 2025, the QEC monitored the review process of PhD programmes, analysing extracts from the minutes of the meetings of the Teaching Staff/Faculty Boards<sup>3</sup> of the programmes in question in which the topic was addressed. The study illustrated a limited and inconsistent implementation of the “Guidelines for the review of PhD programmes” in terms of timelines, aspects and documents to be taken into consideration. The need for greater attention to stakeholder consultation and the definition of corrective actions to address key issues was also highlighted. Finally, the analysis highlighted that, as far as the national PhD programme in Cybersecurity is concerned, the review process had not been carried out.

In light of the monitoring results, the QEC shared its considerations and proposals with the Vice-Rector for Teaching and the PhD and Higher Education Office aimed at promoting the correct and effective management of the process.

First, the Office was asked to urge the Coordinator of the national PhD programme in Cybersecurity to promptly convene the Teaching Staff/Faculty Board to implement the review process. At the same time, the Office was invited to verify compliance with the various activities provided for by the review process carried out by the Teaching Staff/Faculty Boards:

- annually reminding each Coordinator of the need to implement the review process and schedule the meetings of the Teaching Staff/Faculty Board according to the timeframes set out in the Guidelines;
- monitoring the indicators relating to the PhD programme provided for by the AVA3 model;
- ensuring the effective analysis of the results of the questionnaires collecting opinions from the student community and of the documents referred to in the Guidelines;
- ensuring that the minutes of the meetings reflect the analysis carried out, the key issues identified and the proposed improvement actions.

The QEC also emphasised the need to maintain dialogue with stakeholders and verify the implementation status of the improvement proposals identified during the review referred to in the previous point.

As a further improvement, as part of the revision of the “Guidelines for the review of PhD programmes”, the QEC intends to ensure the preparation of a supporting document containing the list of data and documents to be considered for the purposes of the review and providing a reference template to be used during the reporting of such activity.

### 3.2. TEACHING STAFF/FACULTY BOARDS’ ACTIVITIES

The review of the methods adopted when carrying out the meetings of the Teaching Staff/Faculty Boards, the results of which are reported in Table 1, highlighted a widespread use of the asynchronous option in the academic year 2023/24, which limits the comparison and in-depth discussion of the items on the agenda.

Given the widespread and growing use of asynchronous teaching methods, the QEC deemed it appropriate to urge the PhD and Higher Education Office to ensure, together with the Coordinators, that a sufficient number of actual meetings of the Teaching Staff/Faculty Boards are scheduled to allow for discussion with

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<sup>3</sup> The minutes of the meetings of the Teaching Staff/Faculty Boards of the following PhD programmes were analysed: Cognitive, Computational and Social Neurosciences, Cultural systems, Economics, Analytics and Decision Sciences, Management of Digital Transformation, systems Science.

stakeholders on the various topics, including the periodic review of the educational offering. Although during the 2024/25 academic year an improvement in the general situation was noted, the QEC deems it appropriate to continue monitoring the situation and to reiterate the request to guarantee a sufficient number of actual meetings in relation to PhD programmes that still predominantly use the asynchronous mode.

PhD Programme	Academic Year 2022/23		Academic Year 2023/24		Academic Year 2024/25*	
	In-person / online or mixed mode	Asynchronous	In-person / online or mixed mode	Asynchronous	In-person / online or mixed mode	Asynchronous
<b>CySec</b>	3	0	1	0	2	0
<b>CCSN</b>	0	0	1	8	3	3
<b>EADS</b>	4	1	3	5	4	2
<b>CS</b>	0	0	4	2	3	2
<b>SyS</b>	3	2	1	8	3	1
<b>MDT</b>	2	0	2	0	4	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>8</b>

**Table 1.** Statistics relating to the procedures for conducting meetings of the Teaching Staff/Faculty Boards. \*Data incomplete as the academic year is ongoing.

### 3.3. PROCESS FOR SUBMITTING AND APPROVING PROPOSALS FOR NEW EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

The significant expansion of the School's educational offering in recent years has highlighted the lack of a standard procedure to follow when submitting proposals for the establishment of new programmes, whether they concern PhD programmes, joint master's degree programmes or joint university master's degrees courses, etc.

Having recognised the need to standardise the process from the preliminary documentation preparation phase to the approval and establishment of the new educational programme, at its meeting held on 16 January 2025, the QEC initiated discussions with the Vice-Rector for Teaching and promoted the establishment of a Working Group responsible for defining the phases and timelines of the process, the subjects involved and their roles, as well as the documentation to be prepared.

At the time of drafting of this Report, the Working Group's activities are still ongoing as it has subsequently become necessary to make changes to the School's regulatory body.

As regards the educational offering in which the School participates, but for which it is not the Administrative Headquarters, the QEC highlighted the importance of ensuring that the approval deadlines for proposals are aligned with those of the Partner University, as well as having access to the results of students' opinion surveys, which are an important factor to consider when confirming the activation of a specific programme. Since the distribution of questionnaires, as a requirement related to QA, is the responsibility of the Administrative Headquarters, the QEC suggested clarifying, when signing the agreements for the

establishment and activation of joint educational programmes, the possibility for the School to request a summary of the results of the relevant surveys.

## 3.4. SURVEYING STUDENTS' OPINIONS

### 3.4.1. PROCESS OPTIMISATION

To address a series of key issues in collecting the opinion of the student community, both in the questionnaire creation and distribution phase and in managing the results, at the initiative of the QEC, the Governing Body's objectives for the year 2024 include one dedicated to process optimisation<sup>4</sup>.

The transition to the Qualtrics platform was necessary, on the one hand, to facilitate the questionnaire distribution process and, on the other, to allow for the automatic archiving of all data in a centralised database, facilitating data analysis and, consequently, the work of the JSTB, of the Vice-Rector for Teaching and of the Teaching Staff/Faculty Boards.

Given the impact on the educational QA system, in addition to requiring the definition of a new workflow, the migration of all questionnaires addressed to the student community to the Qualtrics platform served as an opportunity for the QEC to review the entire process, from distribution of the questionnaires to the results analysis phase. The QEC therefore carefully monitored the implementation status of the objective, both by communicating with the personnel involved in the migration and setting up the platform, as well as by carrying out tests to ensure the correct functioning of the system.

Overall, in addition to being more versatile, the new platform allows for easier access to collected data and facilitates comparative analysis, which previously required significant personnel effort and manual data entry, resulting in a risk of errors.

The transition was gradual and carried out considering the timing of the administration of the questionnaires, as well as the need to ensure data comparability. The End of Year Questionnaire was the first questionnaire distributed through the new platform in October 2024. With the start of the 2024/2025 academic year, it was the turn of the Teaching Evaluation Questionnaire. Finally, since January 2025, the PhD Programme Evaluation Questionnaire and the Master's Evaluation Questionnaire (now called the Higher Education Questionnaire) have also been managed through Qualtrics.

### 3.4.2. DOCUMENTATION UPDATING

The introduction of the AVA3 model and the evolution of the School's educational offering have led to significant changes in the structural setup of the student community opinion survey system over the last three years. On the one hand, attention has been progressively shifted from the Teaching Evaluation Questionnaire (i.e. the questionnaires on the individual courses offered which, it should be remembered, are not foreseen by the AVA3 model), to the questionnaires for the evaluation of the PhD programme at the end of each academic year (End of Year Questionnaire) and when a degree is granted (PhD Programme Evaluation Questionnaire). On the other hand, a questionnaire has been developed for the evaluation of higher education, advanced training, post-graduate and post-doctoral specialisation courses, executive master's

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<sup>4</sup> Objective "D.1.1 – Optimisation of the questionnaire distribution process to collect students' opinions" assigned to the PhD and Higher Education Office for the year 2024.

degrees or other courses of study and permanent and recurrent higher education offered by the School (Higher Education Questionnaire).

The review and updating of key documents for QA (already mentioned in [section 2.1](#)) therefore also needed to involve the document titled “The system for collecting students’ opinions and their satisfaction” which the QEC had developed in 2019 and the “Guidelines for the distribution and management of the results of questionnaires” approved by the QEC in December 2022. The two documents have been respectively renamed “The system for collecting students’ opinions” and “Guidelines for the distribution and management of the results of questionnaires for collecting students’ opinions” and updated to reflect the current architecture of the questionnaire system in use. The process for distributing and managing questionnaire results has been analysed and standardised to ensure its full functionality for QA and review purposes.

It is important to highlight some specific choices made by the QEC, including that of publishing a summary of the survey results on the School’s website to ensure transparency.

More specifically, with regards to the End of Year Questionnaire, the QEC deemed it appropriate to:

- limit the overall distribution of the questionnaire to students enrolled in the first, second and third year of PhD programmes with administrative headquarters at the IMT School at the time of distribution of the same, in order to achieve greater alignment with the provisions of ANVUR<sup>5</sup>. The opinions of students who, at the end of the official duration of the programme, are completing their thesis or awaiting its defence are, in fact, collected through the PhD Programme Evaluation Questionnaire;
- provide a one-month completion window and send a weekly reminder to maximise completion rates.

This last measure was also included in the PhD Programme Evaluation Questionnaire.

With reference to the Teaching Evaluation Questionnaire, the following were established:

- a maximum time limit (3 months from the end of the course) after which the results of the survey are shared with the professor in charge of the course regardless of whether the results of eventual exams have been recorded;
- that the processing of the results relating to each PhD programme directed to the relevant Coordinator and the Vice-Rector must be carried out considering the courses indicated in the educational offering and only the opinions of students attending that specific programme.

Finally, as regards the Higher Education Questionnaire, the QEC has provided for:

- flexible timing and questionnaire distribution methods, adaptable to the specific characteristics of the course for which the evaluations are being collected;
- that only the AB and the QEC itself report on the results of the surveys for collecting students’ opinions in their respective Annual Reports.

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<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that within the framework of the AVA3 model ANVUR has defined two questionnaires to measure the satisfaction of first- and second-year PhD students and research doctors, respectively.

### 3.5. TRAINING ACTIVITIES AIMED AT TEACHING AND RESEARCH STAFF

In implementation of the provisions of the strategic objective “QA.3 – strengthening the quality of teaching” defined in the Three-year planning document 2025-2027<sup>6</sup>, in 2025 the QEC initiated a discussion regarding training initiatives for teaching and research staff aimed at defining both the topics and the delivery methods. In order to develop the skills of teaching and research staff and encourage analysis on the effectiveness of the teaching provided, the QEC has identified so-called innovative teaching as a macro-theme of particular importance. This involves an innovative approach to teaching and learning, an alternative to traditional lectures, based on the use of cutting-edge methodologies and tools.

After analysing the initiatives offered by other universities, the QEC spoke with an expert professor to explore the possibility of adapting one of the training programmes aimed at teaching and research staff at a large university to the IMT School and, in particular, to the PhD teaching.

Subsequently, given the number of training initiatives that fall within the concept of innovative teaching, the QEC administered a short questionnaire to teaching and research staff aimed at exploring the innovative teaching techniques already in use at the School (including debate, role-playing, project-based learning, flipped classroom, learning by doing and inquiry-based learning) and mapping their interest in understanding and applying one or more innovative teaching methodologies. The completion rate recorded was 42% on a sample of 73 subjects. Most of the respondents (80%) indicated that they are in favour of experimenting with innovative teaching methodologies and interested in learning about new ones. Interest in the new methodologies was evenly divided among the various options proposed, with a slight preference for the flipped classroom option.

In light of the survey results, the QEC has therefore identified a university professor with expertise in the field of educational innovation and, in particular, in the application of the flipped classroom method, and agreed on a training initiative to be held in autumn 2025.

As a further measure to support the quality of the School’s teaching, given the need to offer concrete support to newly appointed teaching staff with limited teaching experience (in general or in the PhD field), the QEC has also invited the pro tempore Directors of the Multidisciplinary Scientific Areas to identify one or more senior teaching staff to work alongside less experienced teaching staff. This will provide the latter with the opportunity to engage with one another and receive active support, for example, in preparing the course syllabus, structuring lessons, etc.

## 4. RESEARCH QUALITY ASSURANCE

As defined in the “[Guidelines for the Quality Assurance system in Universities](#)”<sup>7</sup> made available by ANVUR, with reference to research activities, the QEC “*monitors and supervises the regular execution of the relevant*

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<sup>6</sup> The strategic objective “QA.3 – strengthening the quality of teaching” provides for the organisation of training initiatives aimed at teaching and research staff in line with the provisions of the AVA3 model and, in particular, with the aspects covered by the following: “B.1.1.4 The University promotes, through its initiatives, the training, growth and updating of scientific, methodological and teaching skills of teaching and research staff and tutors to support the quality and innovation, including technological, of educational activities carried out in person and remotely, respecting disciplinary diversity and evaluating their effectiveness.”

<sup>7</sup> Approved with the Resolution of the ANVUR Board of Directors no. 189 of 8 August 2024.

*QA procedures in accordance with what has been declared and planned and ensures the correct flow of information to and from the AB”.*

#### 4.1. FIRST EXERCISE IN MONITORING AND EVALUATING RESEARCH QUALITY

The issuing of the “[Guidelines for Research Quality Assurance](#)” in April 2024 was not promptly followed by the launch of the first research monitoring and evaluation exercise. Taking into account the schedule for the Research Quality Assessment (RQA) exercise relating to the 2020-2024 five-year period, in fact, the Research Quality Assessment Committee (RQA Committee), appointed by Rectoral Decree no. 12512(289) of 1 July 2024, deemed it appropriate to postpone the data collection activities to the second half of 2024 in light of the partial overlap of the information to be collected for the purposes of the two evaluation exercises. The RQA Committee has therefore prepared and administered to all subjects participating in the RQA exercise a form for collecting the following information:

- the research products that can be submitted for the 2020-2024 RQA exercise (up to a maximum of five each);
- the research products to be considered for the purposes of the internal evaluation exercise (up to a maximum of ten each);
- the list of local, national and international research projects of a competitive and non-competitive nature with funding for the School equal to or greater than €5,000.

Once all the forms had been acquired, the RQA Committee focused its efforts on selecting the products to be submitted for the RQA exercise.

The implementation of the provisions set out in the “Guidelines for Research Quality Assurance” was subsequently resumed in March 2025 once the activities related to the RQA exercise had been completed. At the end of the data collection phase by the administrative offices, the QEC deemed it appropriate to consult the Rector to evaluate the role of the Multidisciplinary Scientific Areas (MSA)<sup>8</sup> in the process, considering that, pursuant to Art. 2, paragraph 2, of the Statute, the MSA constitute the reference organisational units for research.

In agreement with the Rector, in this first phase, pending an examination of the role of the MSAs in the process and, more generally, in the QA system, the function of the MSAs was one of coordination. The pro-tempore Directors have, in fact, collected the self-assessment reports produced by the Research Units established in each MSA, without being called upon to play an active analytical role.

At the time of drafting this Report, the final phase of evaluating the quality of research at the School level is awaiting the transmission of all self-evaluation reports by the Research Units. The procedure is expected to be completed within the academic year.

Looking ahead, given the evident challenges in implementing the process in the manner and timeframe indicated in the “Guidelines for Research Quality Assurance”, the QEC believes a thorough review is necessary following the completion of the first monitoring and evaluation cycle, also having consulted the Open Science, Artificial Intelligence, Research, Library and Student Guidance Committee.

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<sup>8</sup> The four Multidisciplinary Scientific Areas, established at the end of 2024, are: Economics, Management and Statistics; Neuroscience, Psychology and Philosophy; Systems Science; Cultural Systems.



It should be noted that the latter, having understood the time-intensive nature of the process for all players involved, has already suggested to the QEC for it to reconsider the frequency of the exercise, opting for a biennial basis, and to evaluate whether to maintain such a broad range of aspects to be mapped.

The QEC reserves the right to draw its own conclusions on the matter, with a view to continuous improvement, only upon the actual completion of the research QA procedure.

The updating of the Guidelines, already scheduled by the QEC, will provide an opportunity to reflect on the improvement interventions to be implemented in response to the key aspects of the process, as well as to define the role of MSAs within it.

## 4.2. REVISION OF THE ACCESS CRITERIA TO THE PERFORMANCE FUND

The [“Regulations for the management of the Performance Fund”](#) of the IMT School provides that additional compensation be paid annually to full-time teaching and research staff in relation to the results achieved in institutional management, teaching, research and third mission activities. This, on the basis of evaluation and resource distribution criteria defined in advance by the Board of Governors, after hearing the opinion of the Assessment Board and the Quality Enhancement Committee and after consulting with the Academic Senate, in a specific Annex to the Three-year planning document.

Given the significant delay in defining the Performance Fund criteria for 2024, approved by the Board of Governors during its meeting held on 30 April 2024, already in May 2024, the QEC made the Rector aware of the importance of defining the criteria for 2025 in time for the inclusion of the same in the Three-year planning document 2025-2027.

In the meeting held on 28 May 2024, the QEC therefore analysed the key issues reported by the Board of Auditors with reference to the 2024 criteria, namely the delay in the timing of adopting the criteria, the failure to link the indicators to the School’s strategic objectives and the absence of differentiation parameters in the reward system, as well as the results of the first disbursement of the bonuses, which highlighted limited participation by fixed-term researchers<sup>9</sup>.

Following the meeting, the QEC forwarded its considerations to the Governance bodies, requesting feedback on the differentiation of the criteria to be applied to research staff compared to teaching staff or, alternatively, the introduction of different thresholds depending on the category to which they belong, and suggesting the involvement of a research staff representative during the criteria review phase. The QEC also noted the timing of the process, reiterating the importance of adopting the new criteria before the start of the reference year.

During the meeting held on 5 December 2024, the QEC then examined the proposed Performance Fund criteria for 2025, defined – at the Rector’s request – by the Open Science, Artificial Intelligence, Research, Library and Student Guidance Committee. The proposal acknowledged the diversification of the minimum requirements for teaching and research staff to access the bonus system, the explicit link to strategic objectives, as well as the decision not to differentiate the amount paid based on performance.

After extensive and in-depth discussion on the matter, the QEC expressed a positive opinion on the proposed Performance Fund criteria for 2025. It supported both the decision to maintain the criteria unchanged, to

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<sup>9</sup> There were a total of 24 applications to participate in the procedure for the allocation of the 2023 Performance Fund, of which 6 from RTD-b and none from RTD-a roles.



allow for a comparative analysis of evaluation outcomes over multiple years and to provide continuity of direction for the School's academic community regarding the evaluation criteria, as well as the introduction of different thresholds for teaching and research staff, with the aim of promoting more balanced access to award resources for both categories.

The criteria for the allocation of the Performance Fund reserved for teaching and research staff for the year 2025 was subsequently approved by the Board of Governors in the meeting held on 18 December 2024 as an integral part of the Three-year planning document 2025-2027 ([Annex B](#)).

### 4.3. MONITORING OF TRAINING AND FIELD RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

In order to ensure the monitoring of field research activities promoted by the School, in line with the provisions of the strategic objective "R.4 – Orienting towards research and strengthening field research" defined in the Three-year planning document 2024-2026, the QEC invited the Research Committee<sup>10</sup> appointed at the time to provide an unambiguous definition of field research and training capable of taking into account the various aspects of the same coexisting within the School.

Based on the definition<sup>11</sup> approved by the Research Committee in the meeting held on 29 February 2024, the QEC subsequently interfaced with the PhD and Higher Education, Research and Knowledge Transfer and Human Resources and Organisation Offices with the aim of clearly defining the methods to be adopted for tracking training and research activities in the field.

The discussions with the administrative offices, on the one hand, highlighted how the field training activities (so-called off-site lectures) were already mapped by the PhD and Higher Education Office and, on the other, the need to define a new system for tracking field research activities. To resolve this impasse, the QEC proposed using the Travel and Activity Authorisation (TAA) form, adding the field research activity option as a further option in the field relating to the purpose of the mission (Type).

The proposed amendment was quickly implemented, thus allowing the School to begin collecting information regarding field research activities as early as June 2024.

## 5. THIRD MISSION QUALITY ASSURANCE

As defined in the "[Guidelines for the Quality Assurance system in Universities](#)" made available by ANVUR, with reference to third mission activities, the QEC monitors and supervises the regular execution of the relevant QA procedures in accordance with what has been declared and planned and ensures the correct flow of information to and from the AB.

<sup>10</sup> The Research Committee's term of office expired at the same time that of the Rector (31 October 2024).

<sup>11</sup> By extension of what was originally defined in the anthropology, ethnography, archaeology and sociology areas, Field Research and Training, within the context of the IMT School, is defined as research and training characterised by significant and necessary direct observation and/or direct collection of new data, materials or information, whether physically or digitally, and which provide for the involvement of third parties, with the related support needs, on the part of the School, linked to access to time spent with the same.

## 5.1. OUTCOME OF THE SECOND MONITORING EXERCISE

Similarly to what happened with the research monitoring and evaluation process, the monitoring of third mission activities was also influenced by the 2020-2024 RQA exercise.

In fact, in order to use the information collected for internal monitoring purposes to guide the choice of the case study to be submitted for the RQA, the second annual monitoring exercise of third mission activities was moved forward September 2024 and the monitoring form was modified, so as to align its content with that of the ANVUR form<sup>12</sup>.

As a further innovative aspect compared to what is defined in the “[Guidelines for monitoring third mission activities](#)”, issued with the Rectoral Decree no. 14385(311) of 2 August 2023, the introduction of a simplified form to record the individual Open Science and Public Engagement activities, which would otherwise risk not being mapped in the process, should be noted.

Following the completion of the monitoring forms compilation phase, the timeliness of the process as defined in the aforementioned Guidelines was impacted by the change in governance and the consequent need to appoint a new Committee responsible for conducting a qualitative assessment of third mission activities.

The 16 monitoring forms and 11 simplified forms (Table 2) were subsequently analysed by the Third Mission Committee in the sessions held on 10 December 2024 and 10 January 2025.

Reference Research Unit / Department / Office	No. of monitoring forms submitted	No. of simplified forms submitted
AXES	2	-
DYSCO	-	1
LYNX	2	-
MOMILAB	1	2
MUSAM	2	-
NETWORKS	2	2
PHIBOR	-	4
Neuroscience Lab	1	-
Library and Research Promotion Office	2	-
Communication and Events Office	4	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>

<sup>12</sup> For further details, please refer to the “[Methods for submitting case studies for knowledge enhancement](#)” document published by ANVUR on 1 July 2024.

**Table 2.** Distribution of the forms collected as part of the monitoring of third mission activities for the 2023/24 academic year.

As defined by the Guidelines, for each activity presented, the Committee expressed a qualitative assessment regarding its consistency with the School's strategic directions, the completeness of the information provided, the impact achieved through the actions undertaken, and formulated an overall assessment accompanied by a brief comment. The Committee also formulated some thoughts and recommendations considering the set of third mission activities mapped with reference to the 2023/24 academic year.

The results of the evaluation of each third mission activity submitted were sent by the Planning, Control and Quality Office to the subject filling out the form and to the activity coordinator on 15 January 2025, together with general feedback on the progress of the monitoring exercise.

The Planning, Control and Quality Office also prepared the summary table of the monitoring results which, after being presented to the QEC during the meeting held on 12 February 2025, was published on [the School's website](#).

Overall, the QEC does not identify any specific key issues in the monitoring and evaluation process of third mission activities. With a view to continuous improvement, the QEC plans to update the Guidelines, having discussed the matter with Third Mission Committee, to include the changes already made to the process and previously presented and to define the role of the MSAs within the same.

## 6. CAMPUS AND SERVICES

With the aim of monitoring the quality of the services provided, the School has renewed its participation in the Good Practice Project (GP), coordinated by the Graduate School of Management of the Polytechnic University of Milan, for the ninth consecutive year (2024/25 edition) and introduced an additional user listening tool.

### 6.1. MANAGEMENT OF STUDY SPACES AND WORKSTATIONS

In the summary report prepared by the Committee of Experts for the Evaluation of Higher Education in 2020, following the on-site visit for Initial Accreditation purposes, the availability of workstations and study spaces reserved for the student community was highlighted as an area in need of improvement. The AVA3 model also focuses on the financial and structural resources available to PhD students and their adequacy to carry out research activities (aspect to be considered D.PHD.2.4). It is therefore essential that the operational and scientific units available to the student community are qualified to ensure the performance of study and research activities, adequate for the number of PhD students and actually usable by the same.

Although, as already highlighted in the previous Annual Report, the overall availability of study spaces, including desks in student residence rooms, is higher than the current number of PhD students, the number of study spaces located in shared spaces is lower than the size of the student community.

The QEC therefore identified the need for the School to adopt a procedure to clearly define the management methods of the study spaces reserved for students. According with the standard operating procedures, the

drafting of the document was delegated to a specially appointed Working Group that met several times with the QEC and the Vice-Rector, who previously held the dual role of Delegate for Building, Spaces and Sustainability and President of the Spaces Committee, adopting their recommendations.

To ensure efficient and flexible management of available study spaces, the introduction of a “floating desk” system has been proposed, in line with the principles of agile working. Instead of having a space assigned for the entire duration of the PhD programme, each member of the student community can reserve one of the available spaces as needed and for a limited period of time.

Following a discussion on the topic of management of study spaces during the joint session, the “Guidelines for the management of study spaces reserved for students” were approved by the QEC during the meeting held on 29 October 2024. After receiving the opinion of the Academic Senate, the document was then approved by the Board of Governors during the meeting held on 20 November 2024.

The “[Regulation containing the guidelines for the management of study spaces reserved for students](#)”, issued with Rectoral Decree no. 20687(474) of 28 November 2024, provided for the adoption of the “floating desk” model, defining the methods for booking the spaces, the controls concerning their use and the sanctions applied in the event of violation of the same rules.

Thanks to a dedicated software solution ([imt.lu/desks](http://imt.lu/desks)), also accessible from mobile devices, students can check available study spaces in real time and make reservations for a maximum duration of three weeks.

Table 3 illustrates the usage statistics for study spaces as of March 2025, at the end of the trial phase of the new booking system.

		San Francesco	Brunero Paoli	Library
<b>Total study spaces available</b>		64	24	38
<b>Occupancy rate</b>	March 2025	62%	13.58%	28.6% <sup>§</sup>
	April 2025	57.5%	17.5%	25.4% <sup>§</sup>
	May 2025	70.46%	16.26%	17.5% <sup>§</sup>
	June 2025	60.68%	11.67%	11.8% <sup>§</sup>
	July 2025	60.99%	10.89%	8.24%
<b>Average booking duration (in days)*</b>		8.32	11.92	5

**Table 3.** Usage statistics for study spaces reserved for students.

<sup>§</sup> Reservations of Library study spaces were managed through a different software solution (Affluence) until June 2025 (inclusive).

\* Maximum allowed 21 days.

Given the effectiveness of the solution adopted, since March 2025, the booking system has also been made available to research grant holders. To ensure that this category also has the best resources at their disposal to carry out their research and to address the lack of assigned workstations, the School has made available a total of 21 workstations, including 19 desks in the San Francesco Complex and 2 offices in the Library.

## 6.2. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS – GOOD PRACTICE 2024/25 PROJECT RESULTS

The Customer Satisfaction survey, aimed at collecting the opinions of internal users regarding the administrative services provided in 2024, was held from 18 February to 12 March 2025.

Despite the promotion of the questionnaire and monitoring of the response rate by the Planning, Control and Quality Office on behalf of the QEC, similarly to the previous year, participation rates in the survey show a general decline (Table 4).

	Good Practice 2023			Good Practice 2024		
	No. of questionnaires filled out	No. of potential questionnaire recipients	Response rate	No. of questionnaires filled out	No. of potential questionnaire recipients	Response rate
<b>Professors (FP, AP)</b>	19	29	65.5%	17	33	51.5%
<b>RTDa/b and RTT</b>	26	36	72.2%	20	36	55.6%
<b>PhD Students</b>	105	266	39.5%	98	293	33.4%
<b>Research Fellows</b>	15	38	39.5%	14	53	26.4%
<b>Total PhD Students and Fellows</b>	165	369	44.7%	149	415	35.9%
<b>Technical-Administrative Staff</b>	39	46	84.8%	44	58	75.9%

**Table 4.** Participation rates in the Good Practice project Customer Satisfaction surveys with reference to the services provided in 2023 and 2024<sup>13</sup>.

The results of the survey were discussed by the QEC during the meeting held on 14 April 2025. These findings were also shared with the General Director and the Directors of the Offices in view of the regular meetings between the QEC and the administrative offices aimed at discussing the general progress of the services offered and the key aspects highlighted by internal users.

The meetings took place on 28 April and on 7 and 8 May and were attended by the following members of the QEC: the President, Giada Lettieri and Valentina Calvi. Gianpietro Sgaramella also took part in the meetings held on the morning of 8 May.

Subsequently, on 13 May, the President and Valentina Calvi met with the General Director to discuss the findings of the meetings with the Directors of the Offices and to define the corrective actions to be implemented in response to the key issues that emerged.

<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that only users who had an active contract with the School for at least part of the reference year were involved in the survey.

Table 5 presents a summary of the key issues and the agreed-upon improvement actions. With a view to transparency and information sharing, the QEC decided to send this Report to the entire IMT Community, demonstrating the effective use of the survey results for the purpose of continuously improving the services offered. The QEC hopes that this measure will encourage internal users to participate in the next Customer Satisfaction survey.

Scope	Key issues	Solutions implemented and/or proposed	Subjects involved
Campus/ Sustainability	Inadequate level of cleanliness in common areas, offices and rooms	<p>The issue was notified to the contracted company in charge of cleaning. Specifically, a thorough cleaning of all the windows on the San Francesco Campus was requested in preparation for the Graduation Ceremony, as well as a thorough cleaning of the offices and common areas was requested.</p> <p>Thorough cleaning of the accommodations and rooms is scheduled for the month of August.</p>	Campus Management and Front Office
	The temperature of School spaces perceived as non-uniform and uncomfortable	<p>Temperature management in common areas is the responsibility of the Cassa di Risparmio di Lucca Foundation, in collaboration with the School's Energy Manager.</p> <p>In commonly used areas (study rooms, bedrooms, corridors) the temperatures are substantially uniform and no reports of issues have been received by the Energy Manager.</p> <p>In the guesthouse rooms it is possible to adjust the temperature up to <math>\pm 3</math> °C from the preset value.</p> <p>Temperature management in the Sacristy, Sala della Botte and Guinigi Chapel is separate and directly controlled by the Foundation. The School has no way to monitor or adjust the settings and, at this time, no workflow has been defined for adjusting the temperatures in these spaces.</p>	Energy Manager Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Lucca
	Environmental impact and energy savings	Motion sensors will be installed to automatically turn lights on and off in common areas. These interventions will be agreed upon with the Cassa di Risparmio di Lucca Foundation and the San Ponziano Foundation, owners of the properties.	Campus Management and Front Office Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Lucca Fondazione San Ponziano
Corporate Portal	Difficulty navigating the School's website and finding the necessary information	Review and update the institutional website by 2025.	Communication and Events Office
	Difficulty navigating the Intranet	Revision of the Intranet by 2025.	

Scope	Key issues	Solutions implemented and/or proposed	Subjects involved
<b>Social Media</b>	Strengthening strategies for engaging external stakeholders in the Community	Launch of targeted actions aimed at greater involvement of external stakeholders. Analysis and monitoring of social media statistics and comparison with similar institutions (particularly IUSS).	Communication and Events Office
<b>Events</b>	Impact of events organised by external parties on IMT School premises as entrusted by its Offices	Initiate an analysis of the economic impact of these events to assess the possible introduction of a contribution to cover the costs of technical and administrative support staff and, simultaneously, evaluate the legal aspects.	General Director Communication and Events Office Research and Legal Support Unit
<b>PhD</b>	Difficulty in contacting PhD and Higher Education Office staff and in receiving comprehensive answers	The PhD and Higher Education Office has been reorganised, with the creation of a section dedicated to internationalisation and Careers Services.	PhD and Higher Education Office
<b>Missions</b>	Very long reimbursement timeframes	Following the expansion of the office, the timeframe required to process reimbursement requests has been reduced. Reimbursements are credited to the user within 20 days of receiving the complete request.	Human Resources and Organisation Office
<b>Library</b>	Timeframes for monograph purchases and interlibrary loans	Greater attention to communicating the terms of use of the service to users by the office.	Library and Research Evaluation Support Office
<b>Research</b>	Support services for drafting project proposals for participation in competitive tenders	The request was submitted to the Open Science, Artificial Intelligence, Research, Library and the Student Guidance Committee to evaluate the possible outsourcing of support services to an external provider other than the one already in use, whose services were limited to the scope of ERC projects.	Open Science, Artificial Intelligence, Research, Library and Student Guidance Committee General Director Research and Knowledge Transfer Office
<b>IT Systems</b>	Difficulty connecting through the Wi-Fi network	New access points have been installed to boost the Wi-Fi network at the Residence on Via Brunero Paoli.	IT Services Office



Scope	Key issues	Solutions implemented and/or proposed	Subjects involved
	Lack of IT equipment available to research collaborators and to technical-administrative staff	Need to identify spaces dedicated to research collaborators, to be adequately equipped with monitors, keyboards, mice, etc. The School is evaluating the purchase of laptops that technical-administrative staff can use for on-site activities.	General Director Spaces and IT Services Committee IT Services Office
	Lack of adequate computing resources to support the research activities of academic staff and the student community	Define the School's policy on computing resources (purchase of servers, use of cloud resources, hybrid solutions)	Rector Governance Spaces and IT Services Committee

**Table 5.** Overview of the key issues and possible areas of intervention discussed during the meetings between the President of the QEC and the Heads of the administrative offices.

### 6.3. COLLECTION OF REPORTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

As of March 2025, the School has expanded the ways in which it listens to its users, making the email address [betterimt@imtlucca.it](mailto:betterimt@imtlucca.it) available to the entire Community, specifically designed as a direct channel for submitting reports and suggestions for improvement to the School's Management. Reports sent to this address come directly to the attention of the Rector who, once the issues highlighted have been received, collaborates with the General Affairs Office, delegating further investigation of the issues to the relevant Offices, identified based on the nature of the report. Where deemed necessary, the relevant members of the Governance body are also engaged and the General Director is informed on the matter.

The implementation of corrective measures in response to the issues highlighted is the responsibility of the relevant offices, which are required to provide an answer directly to the party who submitted the report.

The General Affairs Office, on the other hand, is responsible for monitoring the process, as well as playing the role of liaison between the offices involved, the Rector, the Governance body, and the General Director, should obstacles arise in resolving the request.

At the time of drafting this Report, a total of 16 requests had been received at the new email address, 13 of which had been accepted and resolved.

The QEC has expressed its appreciation for the reporting management methods and the effectiveness of the tool which, in just a few months, has significantly contributed to improving the quality of services provided and the well-being of the IMT Community.

### 6.4. HANDBOOK FOR THE STUDENT COMMUNITY

At the initiative of the JSTB, in April 2025 the QEC began drafting a handbook for students, i.e. a set of information addressing the main concerns that they have raised.

Starting from a set of issues identified by Gianpietro Sgaramella and the student body of the JSTB, after consulting with the student community, the QEC engaged with the administrative offices, in particular the PhD and Higher Education Office, the Campus Management and Front Office, and the Human Resources and Organisation Office, as well as with the Central Guarantee Committee, collecting relevant information.

The Planning, Control and Quality Office then updated the information provided, supplementing it where necessary, and prepared a preliminary version of the guidelines.

At the time of drafting this Report, this version of the guidelines has not yet been submitted to the QEC or the JSTB and the methods for sharing the document with the student community have not yet been defined.

During the drafting of the guidelines, the QEC saw the need to revise certain aspects of the Advisor change process in order to ensure that students would be able to resort to this measure in all the various scenarios that might come up.

The new proposal formulated by the QEC provides that the Coordinator of the PhD programme to which the student is affiliated will take on the role of new Advisor in the event that the student is unable to find one among the School's teaching and research staff. In the event that the Coordinator and the Advisor whom the student

intends to change are one and the same, the Director of the relevant Multidisciplinary Scientific Area or, ultimately, the Rector will take on the role of new interim Advisor. Subsequently, it will be the duty of the interim Advisor to assist the student in finding a new definitive Advisor.

## 7. SELF-ASSESSMENT

The analysis of the QEC must, in any case, consider an examination of the status of implementation of the improvement actions proposed in the previous Report in response to the key points and issues identified (Table 6).

## QA System

In view of the start of the new Rector's term, the QEC hopes that the School can, for the first time, adopt a Strategic Plan with a horizon equal to the duration of the latter's term of office. The document should define the development lines and strategic objectives to which the various plans produced on an annual basis can then be directly connected (e.g. Integrated Activity and Organisation Plan, Communication Plan) as well as the planning of the objectives of the School's Governing Body.

In process

The drafting of the School's first Strategic Plan is currently in progress. According to the strategic objective "OT.2 – Adoption of the Strategic Plan 2025-2030", the document will be adopted by the end of 2025.

The QEC suggests that the beginning of the new Rector's term of office could be an opportunity for a review aimed at determining the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the Governance system in implementing policies and strategies and in achieving the defined objectives, as well as the suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the QA system in achieving the same.

In view of a possible revision of the Statute, the QEC suggests that the Quality Enhancement Committee and the Joint Students and Teachers Board, entities whose role within the School has been consolidated over the years, might be formally recognised in the Statute.

In process

With the Rector's Decree no. 5787(145) of 7 April 2025, the members of the Working Group entrusted with the review of the governance and QA system were identified. Three of the five members of the Working Group are also members of the QEC (Prof. Massimo Riccaboni, Prof. Andrea Averardi and Valentina Calvi). This choice ensures consistency between the review activity and the School's QA policies.

The QA system Review Report was finalised and approved by the Board of Governors at its meeting on 23 July 2025, having received the opinion of the Academic Senate during the meeting held on 22 July 2025.

At the time the Statute was revised, the QEC's suggestion was not implemented.

The documents entitled "Quality Policies" and "Quality Assurance system" were drafted and approved in 2019. In view of the evolution of the internal and external context, these documents are currently in the process of being reviewed and updated.

The changes will need to consider the updates introduced by the AVA3 model, as well as the internal changes that have affected the School linked to the start of the new Rector's term of office (1 November 2024), in particular at a Governance and strategy level.

In process

The review of key QA documents was included as one of the strategic objectives in the Three-year planning document 2025-2027 (objective "QA.1 – Review of the Quality Assurance system"). Consequently, in January 2025, the QEC started its work by defining which documents required revision and the order of priority.

As explained in [section 2.1](#) "The quality policies", "The quality assurance system" and "The system for collecting students' opinions" documents were approved by the Board of Governors, having consulted with the Academic Senate on the matter, during the meeting held on 23 July 2025.

As part of the review of the QA system and the revision of the key documents, the School should clarify and communicate to the entire Community not only the roles and competences of the QEC, the AB and the JSTB, but also the ways in which, where necessary, they can involve other internal parties such as, for example, the Committees supporting the Rector and the administrative offices in the performance of their tasks.

In process

“The Quality Assurance system”, approved in July 2025, clarifies the roles and responsibilities of all actors in the QA system, including the QEC, the AB and the JSTB, as well as the relationships between them.

Initiatives to promote awareness among all members of the IMT Community about the role of these bodies and the QA system in general will be adopted and overseen by the QEC in the second half of 2025.

### Culture of Quality

The QEC deems it appropriate to organise, also in preparation for the Periodic Accreditation, training activities to promote the culture of quality and the involvement of the entire School Community.

In process

Please refer to the previous point.

### Educational QA

During the drafting of the 2023 Annual Report, the QEC invited the JSTB to place greater emphasis on the results of the End of Year Questionnaire and of the PhD Programme Evaluation Questionnaire, which analyse all aspects of the PhD experience.

The QEC also hopes that as part of its reviews of the PhD Programme, the Teaching Staff/Faculty Board evaluates the structure and effectiveness of the research support process, the publications of PhD students as well as the employment success of former students (placement).

In process

In drafting the Annual Report 2024, the JSTB focused on the results of the End of Year Questionnaire and the PhD Programme Evaluation Questionnaire, choosing not to include the analysis of the results of the Teaching Evaluation Questionnaires in the document as they are not provided for in the AVA3 model.

The process of reviewing PhD programmes by the Faculty Boards, as already reported in [section 3.1](#), will be reviewed. On that occasion, the QEC may consider whether to include data on PhD students’ publications and placement among those to be considered by the Teaching Staff/Faculty Boards in their review.

The QEC believes that it is appropriate to evaluate the implementation of policies, including budgetary ones, aimed at encouraging the extension of grants beyond the standard 3 year duration of the PhDs or to lighten the teaching loads during the first year.

In process

As a support measure for the XXXVIII and XXXIX cycle (in other words the first three-year cycles after the four-year experimentation), the School has provided financial coverage for an additional 6 months of scholarship for students who request it, who have completed one or more periods of travel abroad for a total duration of at least 180 days and undertake to discuss their thesis by 2026 (for the XXXVIII cycle) or 2027 (for the XXXIX cycle).

		For subsequent cycles, as no similar financial coverage is envisaged to date, the QEC asks the Teaching Staff/Faculty Boards to review the teaching load with a view to the three-year duration of the PhD programme.
Despite recent progress in discussing the results of the questionnaires for collecting opinions from the Teaching Staff/Faculty Boards, it is necessary to insist and ensure that improvement actions are directly linked to the improvement areas through the analysis of the questionnaire results.	In process	As explained in <a href="#">section 3.1</a> , the QEC pointed out to the PhD and Higher Education Office the need to ascertain the effective analysis of the results of the questionnaires surveying the opinions of the student community, as well as the recording of the key issues identified and the improvement actions proposed by the Teaching Staff/Faculty Boards as part of the review process.
At the QEC's request, the School's Governing Body has included among its 2024-2026 objectives the optimisation of the process of distributing questionnaires for collecting students' opinions.	Completed	The objective was achieved. As of January 2025, all student opinion questionnaires are managed via the Qualtrics platform. See <a href="#">section 3.4</a> for more details.
<b>Research and Third Mission QA</b>		
The first internal research monitoring and evaluation exercise will be carried out in the second half of 2024 in conjunction with the preparatory activity for the 2020-2024 RQA exercise.	In process	The first exercise in monitoring and evaluating research quality is still ongoing. See <a href="#">section 4.1</a> for more details.
The QEC suggests promoting an external benchmarking action with particular attention to other similar institutions, such as for example Schools of Advanced Studies. In the discussion with ANVUR, the QEC suggests highlighting the specific characteristics that are associated with Schools of Advanced Studies, allowing for the development of appropriate research assessment models, with particular reference to interdisciplinary research.	To be implemented	
The QEC suggests that upon enrolment in the School, each student be asked to create an ORCID profile, thus making it possible to monitor	To be implemented	The QEC invited the PhD and Higher Education Office to request the creation of an ORCID profile both by current students and upon new enrolment.

eventual publications by the School's former students after earning a degree using the identifier in question.

The QEC invites the School to pay greater attention to the coordination of third mission activities, with the aim of relating them back to common macro areas defined at a strategic level.

To be implemented

The QEC agrees with the findings highlighted by the Third Mission Evaluation Committee regarding the need to initiate a discussion on a set of indicators to be used for the evaluation of the impact of the various activities.

To be implemented

## Services QA

The QEC is confident that the selection procedures currently underway will allow for a sufficient strengthening of the administrative offices. If accompanied by appropriate quality training initiatives, this strengthening of administrative staff could translate into a significant increase in the quality of services offered.

In process

The following offices were strengthened:

- Purchasing
- General Affairs
- Library and Research Evaluation Support
- Communication and Events
- PhD and Higher Education
- Planning, Control and Quality
- Research and Knowledge Transfer
- Human Resources and Organisation

The QEC has initiated a dialogue with the Facilities Committee aimed at identifying solutions that guarantee efficient use of the available study spaces.

Completed

The School has adopted the [“Regulation containing the guidelines for the management of study spaces reserved for students”](#) and implemented a system for reserving study spaces.  
See [section 6.1](#) for more details.

The QEC highlights the need and urgency of ensuring that students have access to adequate computing resources, including through the evaluation of specific budgetary policies.

To be implemented

The School currently has no computing resources reserved for the student community. Students can access the computing resources available to the research groups they belong to, if any.

<p>The QEC invites the School to evaluate possible alternative tools to enhance internal communication, particularly towards the student community. The update of the School's website, currently underway, could help improve communication.</p> <p>The QEC also recommends that the School promote training actions dedicated to the theme of effective communication towards users.</p>	<p>In process</p>	<p>The JSTB initiated an analysis on the most appropriate ways to reach the student community, which highlighted the lack of effectiveness of email communication and training events.</p> <p>The QEC is drafting a guidebook to facilitate student's access to certain information reported by the latter. See <a href="#">section 6.4</a> for more details on the matter.</p> <p>With regard to the training of technical administrative staff, the School delivered a three-day training course on the development of interpersonal skills, which also touched on the topic of internal and external communication.</p>
<p>The review and updating of the School's website, which is deemed urgent, is underway and should be completed by the end of 2024. The QEC invites the School to engage the Community in defining the content of the website and in evaluating its usability.</p> <p>As far as the SIIMT Intranet is concerned, to which some changes have recently been made as a temporary measure, the QEC identifies the need for a redesign aimed at strengthening and making the tool more effective.</p>	<p>In process</p>	<p>After undergoing a major overhaul in terms of structure and content, the School's website has been online in its new layout since July 2025.</p> <p>The redesign of the SIIMT Intranet is currently being evaluated.</p>
<p>The QEC invites the School to clarify both the communication strategies, as well as the role of the Communication and Events Office. In this regard, it recommends the drafting of Guidelines available to internal users, in which the methods for implementing the School's communication strategy are defined.</p>	<p>In process</p>	<p>The objective "COM.1 – Internal Communication Operational Plan" assigned to the Communication and Events Office for the 2024-2025 two-year period envisages the definition of the internal communication operational plan that will enable the timely and comprehensive circulation of information, fostering awareness and sharing of the School's strategic guidelines.</p>

**Table 6.** Status of implementation of the actions proposed by the QEC in the 2023-2024 Annual Report.



## 7.1. POINTS OF ATTENTION AND KEY ISSUES

Taking into account the provisions of the AVA3 model, following an analysis of the state of maturity of the School's QA system and of the results of the monitoring of the state of implementation of QA processes, the QEC deems it appropriate to indicate in Table 7 the points of attention and the key issues encountered in the hope that they may stimulate discussion by the School's Governing Bodies and the consequent adoption of appropriate corrective measures.

Key issues	Proposed Improvement Actions
<b>QA System</b>	
<p>“The quality assurance system” identifies the MSAs as the reference actors for educational, research and third mission QA activities. However, the role of MSAs in individual QA processes has not yet been defined.</p>	<p>As part of the updating the “Guidelines for the review of PhD programmes”, “Guidelines for Research Quality Assurance” and “Guidelines for the monitoring of third mission activities”, the QEC will define the role of the MSAs and the relationship with the other actors involved in each process.</p>
<p>Absence of a procedure governing the QA and Governance system review process.</p>	<p>The QEC, having also consulted the Review Working Group, will issue special Guidelines explaining the steps of the process, the actors involved and the timing of the planned activities.</p>
<p>At present, the strategic planning process ensures the involvement of the various components of the IMT Community and listening to external stakeholders. However, it is not clear how much and how the outcome of internal monitoring and self-assessment processes is considered for strategic planning purposes.</p>	<p>As part of the Governance system review, the QEC invites the Review Working Group to assess the impact of the monitoring and self-assessment exercises on the strategic planning process. Following the examination carried out by the Review Working Group, the QEC will consider the drafting of appropriate Guidelines.</p>
<p>The IT systems currently adopted by the School are only partly integrated and interoperable. No dashboard is available to support the strategic planning, operational management and QA processes.</p>	<p>The QEC invites the General Director to carry out a survey of the data and IT systems managed by each administrative office. The QEC is also recommending considering setting up a Working Group to define standards for data management and to prepare a prototype dashboard to support Governance.</p>

## Culture of Quality

Need to strengthen activities for the dissemination and promotion of a quality culture.

In line with the strategic objective "QA.2 – Promotion of the culture of quality" and in preparation for the Periodic Accreditation, the QEC will organise, in collaboration with the Governing Body, initiatives dedicated to the various components of the IMT Community to foster awareness of the principles of QA and the QA system adopted by the IMT School and to promote active participation in the continuous improvement cycle.

The involvement of the JSTB in defining training initiatives specifically aimed at the student community will also be crucial.

Generalised decrease in response rates recorded in the questionnaires for collecting students' opinions distributed by the School and in the Customer Satisfaction questionnaires of the Good Practice project, with reference to all internal user categories involved.

The periodic review of the questionnaires for collection the opinions of PhD students planned by the QEC will be focused on finding solutions to encourage their completion. Possible solutions will be discussed at the joint meeting scheduled for September 2025, to which the Vice-Rector for Teaching and the coordinators of the PhD programmes have also been invited.

## Teaching Quality Assurance

Limited implementation of the PhD programme review process, with particular reference to the discussion of the results of students' opinion surveys, defining corrective actions and listening to stakeholders.

The QEC called for an active role of the PhD and Higher Education Office in supporting the implementation of the review process.

Moreover, as part of the revision of the "Guidelines for the review of PhD programmes", the QEC intends to prepare a document to support the efforts of the Teaching Staff/Faculty Boards, in which all the data and documents to be considered for the purposes of the review will be clearly outlined and a template will be provided to refer to when this activity is recorded.

See [section 3.1](#) for more details.

## Research Quality Assurance

Challenges in implementing the research monitoring and evaluation process in the manner and timeframe defined in the “Guidelines for Research Quality Assurance”.

The QEC plans to carry out an in-depth review of the process following the completion of the first exercise and the revision of the “Guidelines for Research Quality Assurance”. As part of the review and updating of the document, the QEC intends to engage the Open Science, Artificial Intelligence, Research, Library and Student Guidance Committee to identify critical aspects and agree on appropriate countermeasures to adopt.

See [section 4.1](#) for more details.

Absence of Guidelines for handling sensitive data collected in research projects, including when the researcher ends their relationship with the School.

The QEC invites the Open Science, Artificial Intelligence, Research, Library and Student Guidance Committee, in consultation with the Data Protection Officer, to initiate an analysis on the topic of sensitive data management for scientific research purposes.

Absence of a procedure for storing/archiving research data and on the use of generative AI in research activities.

The QEC deems it appropriate for the Open Science, Artificial Intelligence, Research, Library and Student Guidance Committee to take action as soon as possible to implement the strategic objective “SO.2 - Setting up an open management system for research data, software, code and working papers” defined out in the Three-year planning document 2025-2027.

Moreover, in view of the increasing use of generative AI in research, the QEC considers it appropriate for the Open Science, Artificial Intelligence, Research, Library and Student Guidance Committee to draw up guidelines to ensure the responsible and correct use of AI-based technologies in both research and teaching. Finally, the QEC invites the School to consider an update of the IMT Code of Conduct and Ethics, in particular by emphasising the importance of the ethical use of technologies, including AI.

## Service Quality Assurance

Limited awareness of corrective actions following the analysis of the results of the Customer Satisfaction surveys of the Good Practice project and limited correlation between the results of the surveys and the organisational performance objectives defined by the Governing Body.

The QEC invites the Governing Body, when defining organisational performance objectives, to consider the results of Customer Satisfaction surveys, with particular regard to the key aspects highlighted by users.

At present, the School has no computing resources reserved for the student community. In order to carry out their research activities, students must make use of the resources available to the research group they belong to, if any.

Well-aware of the key issues related to the limited availability of space to be used as server rooms and of resources dedicated to server maintenance, the QEC invites the Vice-Rector and the Spaces and IT Services Committee to evaluate solutions – including outsourced ones – that will guarantee access to adequate computing resources to the entire student community in order to carry out their research activities.

**Table 7.** The column on the left shows the key issues that the QEC has highlighted in its analysis of the functioning of the QA system, while the column on the right shows the improvement actions proposed by the QEC.

## 8. ANNEXES

### A. LIST OF QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

During the period covered by this Report, the QEC met 12 times on the following dates:

Date	Method	Notes
28 May 2024	Mixed	
20 June 2024	Mixed	
23 July 2024	Mixed	
24 September 2024	Mixed	Joint session between QEC, AB and JSTB
29 October 2024	Mixed	
5 December 2024	Mixed	
16 January 2025	Mixed	
12 February 2025	Mixed	
7 March 2025	Mixed	
14 April 2025	Mixed	
6 May 2025	Mixed	
10 June 2025	Mixed	

