



UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO

University Quality Policies

Updated version following the publication
of the University Strategic Plan 2025-2030

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RECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

Quality policies and processes are the main pillars of a **coherent system** that creates a **cycle for continuous improvement** and contributes to **accountability** towards all its stakeholders, both internal and external ones [cf. [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(ESG\)](#)].

For several years now, our University has had a clear vision of the role of Quality, as confirmed by expert evaluators during the last accreditation visit in 2021. Soon after I was appointed Rector, I called for an update of the Quality Policies, to remark and further strengthen our efforts for improvement.

As a matter of fact, the fundamental principles which underpin the quality of our teaching, research and third-mission activities are also the backbone of the Strategic Plan 2025-2030. They drive the University towards continuous improvement, while also representing a **pact with the civil society**. Moreover, they are very much rooted in the present, and fully embedded in the idea of a **multi-campus University** which aims to reaffirm its role as a **public and multi-disciplinary higher education institution** serving the social, civic, scientific and economic progress [cf. Strategic Plan 2025-2030, p. 4].

The very same participatory process that resulted in the Strategic Plan allowed us to identify another principle, the seventh: the use of an **evidence-based approach**, which relies on data analysis and informed decision-making to encourage transparency and facilitate participation of the whole academic community.

Student-centred focus, transparency, inclusion, internationalisation, commitment to listening, sustainability, evidence-based decision-making: these are the seven principles that shape our University's trajectory as a place of free thought, inclusive and open to responsible innovation. At the same time, these principles reiterate that knowledge, in its essence, needs to be shared. It is only by ensuring the **cohesion** and organic **unity**

of all the activities of our University, while preserving the **autonomy** and **diversity** of its organisational units, students and staff, that we will be able to overcome the numerous challenges ahead of us.

Marina Brambilla



“

**Whatever is worth doing at all,
is worth doing well.**

(Lord Chesterfield)

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QUALITY POLICIES

Purpose

Drawing on the [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(ESG\)](#) and current [AVA accreditation requirements](#), the Quality Policies of the University of Milan aim to:

- **steer** the ways in which the University intends to achieve its goals;
- implement a series of necessary actions to ensure **continuous improvement**.

All processes implemented to reach the objectives set forth in the [University's Strategic Plan](#) and the [Departmental Three-Year Plans](#) must align with the principles and criteria defined by the Quality Policies.

Target Audience

The Quality Policies outlined in this document represent the **University's commitment towards its whole community** and any other interested parties, namely:

- students and their families
- University employees (instructors and technical, administrative and library staff)
- stakeholders within and outside the University
- Italian and European institutions
- professional orders, businesses and associations

- the national and international scientific community
- any other entities, institutions and universities involved in research and higher education.

Scope

The Quality Policies, which are approved by the governing bodies and shared with the entire academic community, are implemented across the organisational structure, in line with the strategic planning of the University.

They are generated by internal players and by the relevant organisational units, monitored and promoted by the [Quality Assurance Board](#), and assessed by the [Independent Evaluation Unit](#). The application of these policies, in accordance with established criteria, **must translate into tangible and measurable improvements** in teaching, research, and third mission activities, as well as in administration and management.

To spread a "culture of quality" according to its strategic guidelines and QA objectives, the University has implemented a [Quality Management System](#) (QMS) concerning the activities carried out by the administrative, technical and library staff and by the participating departments. This QMS is ISO-certified in accordance with ISO 9001:2015.

Compliance of the QMS with the relevant regulations and standards is certified¹ by a third-party certification body and is subject to periodic audits.

¹Certiquality Corporate Certificate no. 29679

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

The University of Milan defines quality as the only possible way to pursue its mission and objectives, and consequently fosters a culture of quality at all levels.

The University has equipped itself with a quality assurance system inspired by the Self-Assessment, Periodic Assessment and Accreditation system (more commonly known as AVA system). This Quality Assurance system is based on internal procedures for the design, management, self-assessment and **ongoing improvement** of the University's teaching, research and third mission activities, as well as of all its organisational, administrative, and management operations. The main objective of the University's quality assurance system is to exercise **responsible autonomy** in the use of public resources, and in collective and individual behaviours relating to its operations.

The University of Milan is committed to constantly improving and implementing its Quality Assurance system, and to presenting it to the entire academic community as:

- a shared method for **planning**, performance monitoring and analysis at individual and group level;
- the backbone of the University's **development** under the Strategic Plan;
- a collective and individual **growth journey**;
- a tool for the **enhancement and mutual integration of the skills** of teaching and technical-administrative staff;
- an incentive to create **public value**.

The University of Milan pursues the fundamental quality principles listed below, all of equal importance:



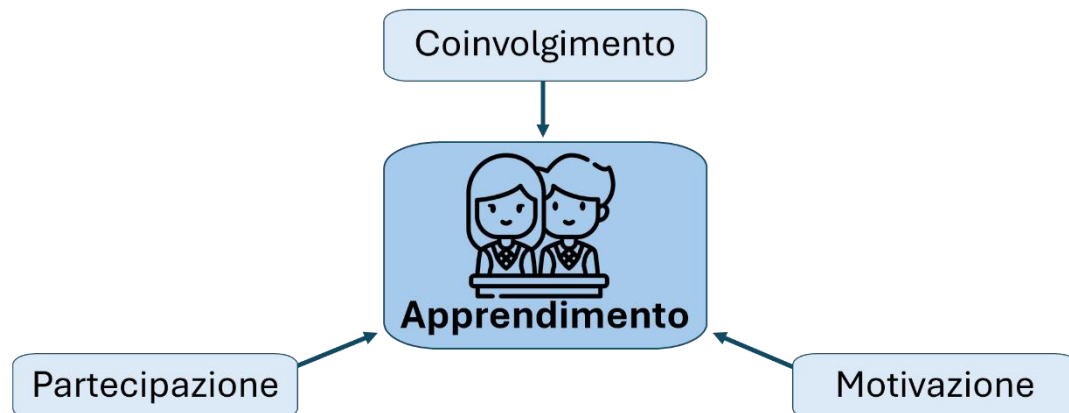
These principles guide the University towards continuous improvement, and represent a pact towards the civil society in terms of quality of teaching, research, and third mission activities.

The quality principles are implemented throughout the different activities that the University carries out in the interest of its key stakeholders, and are consistent with the Quality Assurance objectives specified in the [Strategic Plan 2025-2030](#) — which is in full continuity with the previous plans — as well as with the periodic [review of the functioning of the University's QA system](#).

THE PRINCIPLES IN DETAILS

Student-centred focus

The University of Milan abides by the *European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)* promoting the centrality of the student during his or her academic journey. The idea is to spark their engagement, participation, and motivation in order to amplify learning outcomes.



The University will take steps to ensure all its missions (teaching, research, and the third mission) converge and complement each other, for the benefit of the student and his/her educational journey. The University undertakes to:

- ensure **a constantly improving academic experience**, with strong ties to the outside world;
- **Provide an educational offer that meets European standards and is accessible to all students**, as well as respectful and attentive to the individual needs of each person, whether in terms of their advantages or vulnerabilities;
- take all necessary measures to constantly promote the **right to education**, i.e. an integrated system of services capable of empowering students to be the true protagonists of a University which aims to position itself as a national and international driver of education and science.

The University is receptive to students' opinion and fosters their engagement in decision-making processes, by actively promoting **their representation in the governing bodies**.

Transparency, lawfulness and integrity

The University of Milan intends to develop and constantly deploy all available monitoring actions and tools to ensure **transparency, lawfulness and integrity**, in order to be **fully accountable** both internally and towards the society. To this end, the University is actively working to promote transparency, lawfulness and integrity across all its teaching, research, third mission, management and administrative activities, in full awareness of the central role that these values play in Quality Assurance. Moreover, the University **clearly delineates internal roles and responsibilities** to ensure that all decision-making processes are transparent and all objectives are clear, along with the strategies enacted to achieve them, and their expected outcomes. The University also undertakes to **adopt a transversal and integrated approach** in the management of all processes, in terms of functional responsibilities, with a view to ensuring high standards of service for all internal and external stakeholders, and to constantly improving them. The implementation of transparency, lawfulness and integrity rules will be supported by appropriate efforts to raise awareness within the community, including by way of educational and dissemination activities to develop a culture of lawfulness.

In that respect, the ultimate goal of the University is to actively implement the recommendations of the Italian Anticorruption Authority (ANAC), tailoring them to the peculiarities of its operations.



As regards accountability in research, the University pursues the principles of **Open Science**, which aims to ensure open access to the findings of publicly funded scientific research. To this end, an [Open Science Commission](#) has been established to apply international standards for open access to scientific research findings and data. This is in line with the [Declaration of Messina](#), signed by our University in 2005 in support of the [Declaration of Berlin](#), and to the document [Open science and its role in Universities](#), produced by LERU.

By signing the [Barcelona Declaration](#), the University has also pledged to use open research information, and to disseminate it as widely as possible.

The University promotes and guarantees compliance with research integrity, by organising training opportunities for the academic community, with a focus on doctoral students.

Inclusion, gender equality and a focus on personal well-being



The University of Milan considers the well-being of the academic community to be a central objective, one that must always guide its actions, and believes that equality, diversity and inclusion are indispensable elements in the pursuit of that objective. To this end, the University undertakes to **remove all gender-based discrimination**, by [establishing a number of safeguards](#) to create a gender-equality environment and raise awareness within the academic community regarding gender violence. Also critical is a series of concrete actions to overcome discrimination based on culture, race, religion, sexual orientation and disabilities.

The University has developed a network of gender policy delegates — one for each Department — and has launched [H\(uman\)All](#), a social inclusion hub aimed at promoting educational, research and training activities for combating discrimination.

The University of Milan considers **disabilities as an opportunity for enrichment and integration** for the whole community. Within this arena, the University relies on dedicated services and offices to implement targeted actions.

The University of Milan works to ensure the **protection of the rights of refugees** and welcome them on campus.

In order to create an environment that promotes personal well-being, the University provides **psychological counselling** for its students and staff.

Internationalisation and promotion of exchange and mobility initiatives

Creating a true **multicultural, multilingual and transnational space** for universities: this pledge must inform all operations carried out by the University of Milan.

The University of Milan considers this principle to be a priority strategic objective, and undertakes to foster more **international learning experiences**, by encouraging **student mobility** through study abroad schemes, **double-degree programmes** and other international experiences, as well as by facilitating interactive learning, inter-university cooperation and co-design initiatives.



EUROPEAN
UNIVERSITY
ALLIANCE

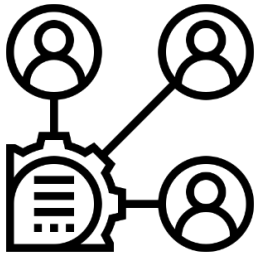
These actions will be developed in collaboration with other networks of universities with shared educational and research goals. More specifically, the University of Milan is committed to playing an active role within the [4EU+ European University Alliance](#), which is aimed at designing and testing a new development model for the European educational system.

As a research-intensive university, the University of Milan promotes the international dimension of research. Pursuant to the [European Charter for Researchers](#), it encourages all forms of mobility within a global human-resource policy, and values mobility experiences within its career progression framework for researchers.



As a member of the [League of European Research Universities \(LERU\)](#), the University of Milan encourages the sharing of best practices on an international level and undertakes to adopt standards and guidelines to promote the University's international outlook.

Listening to and engaging stakeholders inside and outside the University



The University of Milan listens to the opinions of all its internal and external stakeholders and encourages their engagement.

In terms of setting development strategies, the University believes it essential to **seek input** from all internal stakeholders prior to taking action, as well as to **share its objectives and how it is planning** to reach them.

The University promotes a **periodic review of its educational offerings** which takes into account the findings of study-programme monitoring in terms of enrolment numbers, academic progress and professional opportunities after graduation, as well as student feedback.

The University places strategic importance on **designing its educational offerings by adjusting to the needs of the society and the job market**. Therefore, it promotes ethical, ongoing, and fruitful discussions with external stakeholders to ensure its study programmes are aligned with today's rapidly changing job market and socio-economic context, so as to increase employment options for future graduates.

With regard to research and third mission activities, the University of Milan **fosters feedback and engagement from scientific, political and social actors**, in order to raise consensus between external stakeholders and consequently attract public and private investments. The University of Milan aims to increase the "impact" of its own scientific and intellectual production, an impact understood as the influence of research on society, and more specifically as the beneficial transfer of experiences, knowledge, discoveries and opinions resulting from the combination of basic, applied and translational research, public engagement, as well as educational, entrepreneurial and social activities capable of influencing decision-makers, public policies and professional practices.

Sustainability and environmental protection

The University of Milan actively promotes the principles and objectives of the [UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), assuming a **leadership role regarding sustainability and environmental protection in the area**, within the limits of its competencies. To this end, the University has equipped itself with an [organisational support system](#) dedicated to sustainability initiatives (including, for example, those geared towards reducing emissions and the use of plastic, energy savings, and the promotion of sustainable mobility), and undertakes to implement them regularly.

As an agent responsible for educating citizens, the University feels it has the duty to contribute to the creation of a **widespread and informed culture of sustainability** in all its forms, by promoting learning pathways on sustainable development for students and staff.

Evidence-based approach


























The University of Milan adopts an **evidence-based approach** to make informed decisions at all levels and to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of its processes. Information flows and feedback gathering tools are designed to detect, analyse and solve problems in a timely manner, paying greater attention to substantial factors and seeking to minimise the more formal ones.

As a general rule, monitoring and review processes at all levels are supported by data and indicators to be considered valid, and follow-up actions are tied to specific objectives, whose achievement can be verified over time.

This evidence-based approach is crucial to facilitate **open and transparent decision-making processes** and encourage **conscious and informed participation** by the whole academic community. It is an incentive for continuous improvement, as it enables the University to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

QUALITY GOALS

The main principles of these Quality Policies, which inform the University's teaching, research and third mission activities, are reflected in the **system objectives** described in the [Strategic Plan 2025-2030](#), as shown in the table below.

QUALITY POLICIES	Strategic Plan 2025-2030 – 7 system objectives: TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION, DIGITALISATION, SIMPLIFICATION						
	1. AI-driven University	2. Digital University and the central role of data	3. Guidelines for career evaluation	4. People and community engagement for knowledge enhancement	5. University as a creator of public value	6. Making Open Science a common practice	7. Enhancing communication between governing bodies and the academic community
Student-centred focus							
Transparency, lawfulness and integrity							
Internationalisation and promotion of exchange and mobility initiatives							
Listening to and engaging stakeholders inside and outside the University							
Inclusion, gender equality and well-being							
Sustainability and environmental protection							
Evidence-based approach							

Similarly, there is a strong correlation between the main principles of our Quality Policies and the principles for a common strategy specified in the [Strategic Plan 2025-2030](#)

QUALITY POLICIES	Principles included in the Strategic Plan 2025-2030			
	1. Strengthening our positioning as a public, multi-disciplinary and multi-campus university	2. Promoting the development of individuals in an evolving society	3. Increasing innovation and social responsibility in all fields of research and knowledge	4. Ensuring sustainability and the right to higher education, accessibility and inclusion
Student-centred focus		😊		😊
Transparency, lawfulness and integrity	😊		😊	😊
Internationalisation and promotion of exchange and mobility initiatives		😊		😊
Listening to and engaging stakeholders inside and outside the University	😊	😊	😊	😊
Inclusion, gender equality and well-being		😊	😊	😊
Sustainability and environmental protection	😊		😊	😊
Evidence-based approach	😊		😊	