PEGASO INTERNATIONAL
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION
MFHEA Licence n° 2016-001

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Internal Quality Assurance Standards Document

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1. Quality Assurance Policy

European legislation establishes the fact that any educational institution should ensure adequate levels of quality, efficiency and effectiveness for its services. As a result, the Quality Assurance (QA) system of Pegaso International (PI) provides for the introduction of initial and periodic QA through a self-assessment system, which ensures quality and effective teaching and research, built on consistent procedures, criteria and indicators.

This process is coordinated by the QA Director, in collaboration with the QA officer responsible for the implementation of policies approved by the management of PI in the field of Quality Assurance. The QA Office provides support together with training in self-evaluation processes. The QA Director is also responsible to send regular QA reports to the Rector. PI's organogram may be viewed in Appendix 1 followed by a description of the roles and responsibilities depicted within.

PI identifies among its objectives the personal, cultural and professional growth of it students whilst keeping in mind the needs of society. To this end, the development of scientific research, together with the effectiveness and efficiency of PI's procedures, is extremely important. PI is a firm believer of QA in higher education since its primary responsibility is to provide quality education to its students. This is achieved by:

- Making use of highly esteemed and established academics in order to develop its curriculum.
- Designing and evaluating each unit using experts in the field.
- Utilising modern learning techniques, which have been proved to be highly effective (such as the flipped classroom methodology).
- Keep close contact with industry in order to ensure that the courses offered are relevant for the needs of tomorrow.

The institution is also committed towards the continuous improvement of all the teaching and administrative staff by cultivating a culture of continuous improvement. This is achieved by:

- Implementing innovative approaches (such as video lectures, fora, etc.) to train staff with the help of technology, thereby guaranteeing a better quality of life for its staff.
- Linking academia with research in order to ensure the most up-to-date teaching material. This is achieved by urging lecturers to keep on publishing their research in peer-reviewed publications such as international journals and conference proceedings.
- Supporting third-party activities, which guarantee knowledge transfer with regards to spin-offs, lifelong learning and public engagements, via, for example, through sponsorships or collaboration agreements signed between institutions.
- Engage external stakeholders who have an expertise in the field in order to ensure that new courses are relevant to the needs of the labour market whilst older courses are realigned to those needs.
- Strengthening the principles of legality, transparency and academic integrity whilst fighting plagiarism, intolerance and discrimination among students and staff.

Legality, transparency and academic integrity are crucial to the fostering of trust among PI's academic community and students. Especially since the integrity of work submitted for academic credit should be, without doubt, the work of the individual. When such an environment is created, ideas start brewing and individuals normally achieve a higher potential. The violations, which the organisation does not tolerate, include (but are not limited to):

- Plagiarism - taking someone else's work and presenting it as one's work. To avoid this, students are urged to quote, cite and acknowledge where such possibility exists.
- Collaborate without permission – thus passing someone else's work off as one's own.
- Falsification of data – reporting data, which is not obtained as product of rigorous methodologies.
- Cheating – the use of any unauthorized assistance during examination.
- Other – which might include providing false information, stealing, damaging property, discrimination, intolerance, etc.

In the event of a breach, academics are urged to report the incident to their superior and students should refer the matter to an academic on trust. As soon as the breach has been reported, Pegaso International will setup an investigative committee tasked with looking into the matter and taking any necessary corrective actions. The committee can decide to either acquit or sanction the individual. The sanction ranges from a simple warning to expulsion.

The Evaluation Committee tasked with overseeing the Quality Assurance of the institution is made up of different stakeholders all having different roles and viewpoints. These include (but are not limited to) the following members:

- Students are invited to monitor, review, etc., the educational process.
- Teachers and researchers monitor and review the entire process, resource allocations, scheduling, research planning, etc.
- Technical and managerial staff monitor and review the entire process.
- Families participate in periodic meetings organized by PI.
- Secondary schools assist in the planning phase and during the initial orientation.
- Other Educational Institutions which collaborate with PI and which are used for external examinations.
- National and local institutions are consulted regularly with regards to the labour market needs.
- Industry partners advise on labour market needs whilst also helping in internships, placements, mentorships, etc.

The committee members are approved by the Rector, having regard to consent by the Academic Committee, for a term of one year (which can be renewable). Their remit is to perform periodic internal evaluations of efficiency, effectiveness and quality of administrative management, teaching and research activities.

Quality in Education

PI considers the following basic principles with regards to the quality of teaching:

- **Identification of strategic areas** – through innovative framework agreements with representatives of the labour market, professionals and institutions. The innovation lies in the fact that PI shares its research capacities with SMEs thus helping them venture into new strategic areas whilst lowering their risks.
- **Student centred learning** – within the learning process. This is achieved by getting teachers to participate in discussions with learners and ensuring multimodal ways of learning. Thus students can choose their preferred learning methodology and develop healthy academic relationships with the lecturers. The Pegaso International platform already caters for these multimodal methodologies. Taking into account the centrality of the student, appreciated as a person with experiences to be valued, prior to being induced to PI's cognitive and exploratory resources, PI organises an orientation session, the objectives of which are to encourage learning, encourage students to make choices, help them organize their studies and plan their university career in the best possible way.
  PI also strives to ensure that the programme of studies' content and learning outcomes are consistent with the requirements of the various professions and serve the needs of the labour market. In accordance with these requirements, PI activates agreements with institutions, companies and structures, in many cases, proposed by the student himself.
- **International dimension of teaching** – is reinforced through
  - Strengthening the international image of PI.
  - Signing of cooperation agreements with other educational institutions especially those in the Mediterranean area.
  - Helping students master their command of international languages, such as English.
  - Promoting student and staff mobility.
  - Encouraging international internships with local and foreign organisations.
- **Student monitoring** – is aimed at introducing measures that reduce attrition through the
  - Creation of information services which provide statistical information on the labour market.
  - Strengthening of guidance services that guide students in their choices leading towards desirable employment opportunities.
- **Labour market access** – for graduate and post-graduate students, by strengthening:
  - Career guidance through the availability of dedicated professionals tasked with answering the queries of the students.

- Placement activities by organising internships with various organisations thus giving students a unique opportunity to learn by doing.
- Support for working students through the online platform which offers 24hr support and the availability of the tutors who are always ready to assist the students especially outside working hours.
- Promotion of lifelong education through the flexibility offered by the electronic platform thus ensuring that irrespective of one's commitments, the course can be tailor-made for one's special needs.

Quality in Research

PI considers the following basic principles with regards to the quality of research activities:

- **Signing of International agreements and collaborations** – with other universities, research centres and companies wishing to contribute to the promotion of scientific work.
- **Co-financing projects** – proposed by teaching staff, which have been approved after an open completion.
- **Promoting the organisation of conferences** – both at national and international level and facilitating participation in similar high-calibre events.

PI is working to achieve or improve the following:

- Provide further autonomy to its departments and subgroups.
- Push further scientific excellence by encouraging participation/publications in international conferences and journals.
- Increase research effort within the various research groups.
- Organise at least two scientific events on a national level in order to showcase the results obtained.
- Expedite the process of creating new start-ups, which stem from the research being conducted.

Quality Student Services

PI goes to great lengths to support its students, especially since most of them are adults thus having particular requirements, as they have to deal with their full-time work and their part-time study. Hence, it is vital to equip them with the skills they need to harness opportunities in the labour market in the shortest time possible. To this end, PI plans to deliver a quality service by:

1. Offering an initial orientation through a welcome pack prepared by the admissions staff taking into considerations the cultural differences that might exist.

2. Providing interactive teaching, which focuses on self-learning and self-assessment tests.
3. Verifying the student's achievements through mid-term tests, project works and final examinations, where applicable.
4. Assigning a tutor to every student, thus minimising the learning curve associated with the online platform whilst maximising its benefits.

The operating rules of the Education and Scientific Boards are based on the following principles:

1. Highly qualified members, who have a track record of publications in international conferences and journals together with relevant work experience.
2. Management roles assigned to experienced educators and managers based upon individual assessment of competencies and qualifications.
3. Technical and administrative support offered by the staff of the organisation.
4. Grant students full and transparent access to all of their personal data.
5. Management must meet anytime it is necessary and at least once a month, via virtual meetings and online communications, in order to ensure the smooth running of all the operations.
6. Extracts of all the minutes must be distributed to all the interested parties thus ensuring full transparency of operations.
7. The Management is to draft a yearly plan, which also takes note of contingencies in case of divergence from the original targets.

The objectives of the Academic Committee include:

- The promotion of QA within the organisational culture.
- The creation of QA processes.
- The guarantee of continuous improvement within all the structures.
- Efficient and effective structures to provide training.

Functions related to educational activities include:

- Update (as the need arises) and verify course information available ~~online~~ on the official website.
- Update and verify QA procedures related to Education.
- Organise and monitor surveys for students and alumni regarding their satisfaction of teaching materials, guidance and support.
- Organise and monitor revision of papers and re-sits.
- Organise and verify examination related information flows.
- Evaluate the efficacy of support actions and their effects.

Functions related to research activities include:

- Organise and verify the information pertaining to each research group. Research groups are created based upon shared interests of lecturers and normally form part of a department. However, a research group might have participants from other faculties and departments. They are also formed to contribute to and participate in the annual PI conference sessions or as research groups within the PhD course.
- Organise and verify QA procedures related to Research. The procedures ascertain the responsibilities of those involved in the research; they must ensure transparency, proper training, adequate facilities, the use of sound methodologies and the observation of research ethics.
- Organise and verify research related information flows.

Course Quality Assurance

To reach its intended objectives, every course must adhere to strict QA procedures. It is, therefore, imperative that:

1. The QA objectives are well defined.
2. All the QA processes are in place.
3. Credible metrics are chosen in order to highlight whether the chosen targets have been met.

Thus, it is vital that the QA officer together with the course coordinator performs the following functions for each course:

- Identifies possible improvements and requests amendments during the cyclical review, in order to update didactic contents and methodologies.
- Checks that the objectives of the course have been achieved.
- Produces an annual report on the quality achieved throughout the year.

The QA officer, together with the QA Director and the course coordinator; after analysing the results obtained from the assessment tests, the examinations, the surveys and other material must evaluate whether:

- The course meets the level expected by the demands of the labour market.
- The course meets the students' expectations.
- The teaching modules are reaching the desired objectives.
- The lecturer's qualifications and skills meet the required standards.
- The teaching material has been updated with the latest information and whether different modes of teaching are being used, thus making the topic more accessible.

- The examination has been fair and covers a substantial part of the syllabus.
- The students have been guided to prepare themselves better for re-sits through self-assessment tests, etc.
- The results of the various surveys are followed through to ensure that any corrective action necessary is taken.
- The most relevant indicators are being taken into consideration.

Academic Integrity

PI promotes honesty, transparency, objectivity, impartiality and independence in research, thus guaranteeing original results, which contribute to the advancement of the field of study. When an intentional or unintentional deviation from the core values is detected everyone has a duty to prevent, correct or report such errors. In such case, the following procedures are to be adopted:

1. **Try to avoid the problem.** If possible, talk directly with the colleagues in question to dissuade then from taking actions that could violate the law or company regulations.
2. **Contact your immediate superior.** Almost all problems can and must be managed at this level. If for any reason one feels uncomfortable to raise the issue to a superior, a report should be submitted to one of the other managers.
3. **Consult Human Resources.** Examine the issue with the Human Resources office since the office is staffed with experts in various fields who can assist in the rapid resolution of the problem.
4. **Seek help from the Legal Department.** The legal department consists of experienced legal professionals. There is no legal requirement that cannot get a straight answer from the legal department or other experts with whom they cooperate.

In the case of academic fraud, PI adopts a zero tolerance policy. The process to be followed is:

1. As soon as the lecturer detects academic fraud, s/he is to draft a brief report and inform a direct superior.
2. If the offence is not deemed grave, then a verbal warning is given to the student, who is instructed to correct the plagiarised work.
3. If the offence is deemed grave, then an ad-hoc Disciplinary Board is set up in order to investigate the case. The Disciplinary Board is appointed by the Rector and is composed of 3 academics tasked with the investigation of the offence. If the student is found guilty, the Discipline Board can:
    a. Issue a written warning and take corrective actions.
    b. Fail the student from the particular unit.
    c. Suspend the student for a specific time period.

Equality, Equity, Inclusivity and Diversity

Everyone has the right to a rich, fulfilling and enjoyable working and academic experience and so the safety and wellbeing of staff and students in higher education are vital. PI aims to create a future in which anyone with the will and potential to succeed has the opportunity to transform their lives through accessing an outstanding learning experience.

As a firm promoter of equality, PI is against any form of discrimination irrespective of nationality, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, political or religious beliefs. PI believes in the spread of a culture based on the universal values of human rights, peace, environmental protection and international solidarity. PI is proud to be a multi-cultural community; PI values diversity, and is determined to ensure that the opportunities it provides are open to all. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strongly underpins PI's vision and corporate strategy. Because of this, if anyone is faced with any form of discrimination, s/he is to:

1. Discuss the matter directly with the colleague in question.
2. Report the matter to a direct superior.
3. Consult Human Resources.

PI manages all the QA procedures mentioned in this document. Furthermore, none of its training activities will be subcontracted. PI anticipates promoting activities in partnership with other public and private entities and, in such cases, will apply the same Quality Assurance Standards that are already being applied by the organisation.

Pegaso International intends to develop scientific research as part of its academic programmes, the focus of which lies in the four incentive factors identified below:

a) Specific studies designed to keep the focus on learning models, on-line teaching, the impact of the use of communication technologies by higher education institutions and new frontiers of e-learning.

b) The promotion of research involving the teaching staff on topics that recall didactic commitments in order to implement the specialized knowledge of those who work with PI.

c) Research projects entrusted to professors and articulated in disciplinary areas of primary importance with respect to PI courses.

d) Research activities arising from PI's commitment to the third sector and therefore with particular attention towards the world of professions and that of adult education.

PI management appreciates and values research collaborations with other universities, as possible partners for cooperation agreements.

Agreements that allow participation in international research projects that can be translated into scientific works shared with experts working in foreign universities are also encouraged.

In order to develop research programmes, as well as to ensure a high quality standard of the institution, it is considered necessary to consolidate scientific collaborations with other Universities and HEIs. It is thanks to the cultural and professional enrichment of the teaching staff, through advanced research activities, that it is possible to guarantee a qualitative surplus in teaching activities. Furthermore, the participation of students in research, development, innovation and technology transfer activities, both in the context of applied teaching, during their thesis and the internship periods, strongly stimulates their learning skills and projects them into the world of work as extremely qualified professionals.

Therefore, among the tools that will be adopted to put research programmes into practice, as well as to encourage Third Mission activities, technology transfer is included: it is expected to support applied research activities, as well as entrepreneurial and technical-scientific activities, such as academic spin-offs, research consortia and small and medium-sized enterprises.

Furthermore, scientific conferences will be organized at an international level, to allow researchers to present their findings/publications and create and/or consolidate fundamental contacts with leading exponents of the world of scientific research and industrial realities.

In line with its institutional commitment to scientific research, Pegaso International carries out multidisciplinary PhD courses in which PhD students will carry out constant didactic research aimed at acquiring the most advanced scientific knowledge.

The PhD course intends to ensure the cognitive tools, the methodological resources and the research opportunities through which to introduce scientific work and training of skills in differentiated fields.

Below are the criteria that PI applies for the evaluation of an appropriate research thesis, in fulfilment of the PhD course:

1. Evidence that the research carried out represents a significant contribution to the knowledge base of scientific literature relating to the specific disciplinary area (Quality and impact of the results obtained);

2. Evidence that the research represents an original contribution;

3. Evidence of the candidate's ability to create conceptual links between the subject matter of the thesis and the skills acquired during the study stage of the course;

4. Evidence of the candidate's ability to identify and apply the most suitable research methodologies for the development of the subject matter of the thesis;

5. Clarity in the organisation and in the definition of objectives.

Pegaso International also promotes and facilitates international cooperation in the field of Research Doctorates. To this end, Pegaso International stipulates specific agreements with foreign universities for the development of joint PhD theses.

2. Institutional Probity

PI is governed by a Board of Directors, composed of directors appointed as per Memorandum & Articles of Association of the company, incorporated in Malta on 13 July 2015 (C-71423). The directors have delegated authority and are the authorised signatories. Furthermore, the legal representative of PI has effective residence in Malta.

The company is required by law to maintain accurate books of accounts, which should reflect the true and correct position of their affairs, as well as give sufficient clarifications of their activities. Accordingly, the Board shall appoint a reputable auditing firm as an independent body whose duty will be to submit an annual statement reporting the financial situation to the Board and to the shareholder/s at the annual general meeting, and to provide guidance on all taxation issues. The Board shall also act upon any recommendations made by the auditors from time to time. Also as prescribed by law, the directors shall deliver to the Registrar of Companies, for registration, a copy of the company's annual accounts laid before the company in a general meeting, together with a copy of the auditor's report and the directors' report.

One of the primary roles of the Board is to ensure that it has a sound system of internal financial management and control. In line with this, the Board shall establish annual budgetary forecasts including capital investment planning, as well as put financial systems and regulations in place to administer and monitor its business against such forecasts, and ensure that these are being followed and complied with.

The Board of Directors includes members from Universita` Telematica Pegaso (UTP), the parent organisation of PI with its head office located at Piazza Trieste e Trento, 48 – 80132, Napoli, Italy, 05115071218. The collaborative relationship between the two is regulated by a cooperation agreement, signed on 15 January 2016 plus addendum, signed on 05 July 2016, and renewed on 15 October 2018, through which UTP has put at the disposal of PI all of its resources, knowhow and expertise, and processes and procedures, in order to ensure the success of PI. The Board shall adopt such processes and procedures of UTP in order to ensure institutional probity, including but not limited to public disclosures, staff code of conduct, gifts and hospitality, money laundering and other aspects that ensure financial control and integrity.

The Board has the responsibility for the on-going strategic direction of PI, approval of major developments and the oversight of the day to day operations of its business to be carried out in line with the strategic vision of UTP.

The Board also has the responsibility of ensuring that persons engaged to occupy senior employment positions within the company, including heads of department, are fit and proper persons and able to ensure the successful delivery of the approved educational courses and

programmes, which are the core business activities of PI. In addition to the recruitment process for senior positions that will be established from time to time, short-listed applicants will also be asked to complete a declaration covering such issues as:

- Previous convictions of an offence
- Professional or academic misconduct
- Provision of false or misleading information
- Bankruptcy
- Other, as necessary

PI will retain the right, at all times, to carry out third-party checks in relation to the above, until the Board is duly satisfied. Throughout the process, the Board shall ensure a fair approach to the recruitment, assessment and selection process leading to the filling of all senior employment positions, whether on fixed term or indefinite contracts.

3. Design and Approval of Programmes

The design and development of educational programmes, based on learning outcomes and influenced by the needs of the labour market, lie at the base of PI's QA System. Since the student-centred approach is fundamentally the cornerstone of its programmes, PI ensures that its commitment towards the student is maintained through:

- The improvement of guidance services to students (internships and apprenticeships, supporting integration in the labour market, etc.);
- The quick identification of the student's perception with respect to expectations and the expected quality thus aiming to increase overall satisfaction;
- The continuous monitoring and improvement of the didactics, which, together with the student and the lecturer; reflect, analyse and decide all the major changes concerning the programme.
- The increase in online services which benefit the student.
- Teaching staff in possession of the required qualifications, competences, expertise and applied/international experience.
- Questionnaires filled in by students via the platform, whereby they are asked to evaluate the lecturer both from a knowledge point of view and also based upon effective communication/assistance to students.
- The process to confirm curricula based on the following procedures:
    - The Academic Committee co-ordinating any change within the degree programmes and their regulations as well as the commissioning of new degree programmes or the decommissioning of existent ones.
    - In the case of new training programmes, an ad-hoc Evaluation Team is setup in order to create the business case for the new programme.

To evaluate the various courses, the following procedures are adopted:

a) If, during the orientation phase it emerges that the student does not have adequate competence in the use of the English language, proficiency is assessed through an oral interview and the student offered to attend one of PI's language courses, together with the degree course.

b) Throughout the course, students are requested to work on written tasks. These might include mini-projects, essays, assignments, reports, etc. The scope behind this is to ascertain whether students understand the material taught in the course and to check whether they can apply it to solve problems.

c) Evaluate the progress of the training process based on appropriate indicators together with the views of students and teachers. After analysing this information, it has to be decided whether to take corrective action or not in order to reach the desired objectives. d) Monitor the educational activities of the various students by evaluating

a) Personal study (including reading slides, watching video lectures, interacting on the platform with other students, etc.) by means of statistics obtained from the e-learning platform
b) Interaction with lecturers or tutors.
c) Participation in work placements, internships, etc. where applicable.
d) Satisfaction levels. as expressed through surveys and student opinions sent via the platform.
e) Periodic internal audits.
f) Analysis of reports received through the various online channels (including social media).
g) Non-compliance of standards in service delivery.

PI qualifications are in line with EQF regulations thus making it comparable with other European learning systems. The EQF recognizes that education and training systems in Europe differ to the point that one needs to shift the focus on the learning outcomes in order to make comparative analysis leading to cooperation between different countries and institutions. In the EQF, the individual learning outcome is defined by what an individual knows, understands and is capable of doing on completion of a learning process. The EQF therefore focuses on learning outcomes (rather than on inputs, such as the duration of the study period), which are outlined in three categories: knowledge, skills and competences. This means that qualifications in any combination refer to a wide range of learning outcomes, including theoretical knowledge, practical skills, techniques and social skills, as well as the transversal and sectoral skills, which provide the ability to work with other people. The policies followed by PI on the subject are concentrated around the following requirements:

- Support students that possess on-the-job experience by facilitating validation of non-formal and informal learning. The attention focused on learning outcomes makes it possible to assess whether the results obtained in these settings are equivalent to formal qualifications in terms of content and relevance.
- Commitment to promoting greater mobility of both students and workers, allowing them to easily showcase their broad level of competences to potential employers in other countries. This will help employers interpret the qualifications of applicants, thus supporting labour market mobility in Europe.

In addition, PI states that the information required for the establishment of degree programmes (name and course, the demand for training, specific training objectives, expected learning outcomes, teaching framework, language, mode of delivery, final test, entry requirements, etc.) are decided after consultation with stakeholders within the labour market. Therefore, the specific learning objectives and outcomes are designed by taking into consideration the significance of the course of study in terms of employment and identifying prospective career opportunities once the students graduate. The consultation of the various stakeholders is an activity required in the design phase of the study programme. In particular, this consultation is made in the "cyclical review" and not necessarily every year in the annual review.

When a consultation is necessary, PI must identify the scope of the consultation, the stakeholders involved and finally organise the actual consultation process.

The consultation might include (but is not limited to) meetings with people from or documents published by:

- Professional bodies.
- Trade unions.
- Government departments.
- Regulators
- National or European Statistics
- Seminar / Conference Organisers.

The consultation can take various forms and this includes:

- Focus groups.
- Distribution of the proposed course description.
- Requests for feedback.
- Presentations
- Other

After completing this process, all the documents collected from the previous exercise are sent to a professional entrusted with collating all of this information, who will normally be a seasoned professor already employed by the institution as an expert in the field. The final output will be to compile the accreditation form required by MFHEA. Since PI is not a self-accrediting agency, it will submit the proposed programme to MFHEA for approval.

The courses will follow the guidelines proposed by the MFHEA which include:

a) 180 ECTS for undergrad and 90/120 ECTS for Master degrees,
b) Aimed at students who completed a higher secondary school diploma (EQF Level 4) in the case of an undergraduate degree and a first degree in the case of a Master's degree,
c) Makes use of all the digital resources available on the online platform,
d) Ensure compliance with the MQF, the Malta Referencing Report 2016 and subsequent updates
e) Designed to enable smooth and flexible student progression throughout the academic path.

4. Student-centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment

There is sufficient research and evaluation literature to suggest that new modes of teaching and learning are emerging through online networks and communities, access to remote experts and, more recently, mobile technologies. E-learning is not simply a matter of turning a traditional course into an online version. It is also about using technology to what many may regard, or are accustomed to, a campus-based course in ways that add value to the learning experience as well as support new modes of learning and teaching.

When it comes to pedagogical approaches for online learning, the primary knowledge transfer tool at PI is the video lesson, usually around 30 minutes long. Each module of a course would include a number of such video lessons. Students and lecturers are of course able to interact beyond the video lesson, through facilities available via the e-learning platform such as chat, forum, video conferencing and other formats. Perhaps, more importantly, as online learning is concerned, interaction during the course – part of the pedagogical approach – also occurs via the following relations: student-lecturer, student-student and student-contents. The following three different pedagogy levels are provided by PI through its e-learning platform:

The most basic level is that centred on technological means; here the e-learning platform's main function includes storing resources and making them available to students and teachers. Presenting contents using PowerPoint presentations, transcripts of video lessons, reference lists and providing contents in personal pages of teaching staff or on specific sites intended for particular subjects or courses are further examples of this. At the next level, the video lessons can be considered as teacher-centred learning, although they are much more than this since they form part of a much wider learning experience.

At the next and most important level, the emphasis is on student-centred learning. Student-centred learning is characterized by emphasis and centrality on the student. A student-centred context also meets the needs of the teacher, the institution, society and, often, the group of students. Creating a student-centred approach involves providing different students with different options. In this context, the role of the teacher changes from the traditional role as exclusive transmitter of knowledge, to one of a facilitator and an orienting guide in the student's learning, as the teacher seeks to respect the student's pace of learning and style.

PI's e-learning platform encourages student participation on all fronts and all levels. As a result, the student – and the lecturer - gains through co-operative learning, or crowd-sourced learning, which is based on learning together as well as from each other. This is especially important when

considering that many students are mature students and have life and work experiences to fall back on and to share with others. Indeed, when it comes to working students, higher flexibility is demanded from PI, due to the students' work commitments and the e-platform provides them with maximum flexibility to study anytime, anywhere. In addition, PI also supports the students with a full time, as well as a part time, commitment, as required by the Course of Studies Regulations. PI makes use of an extensively researched didactic model, which is based on the didactic model of parent organisation UTP for this purpose.

Special procedures, even at a didactic level, are practised in order to support the requirements of students with special needs. Students with disabilities require unique support in the online learning environment. PI's e-learning platform already offers a major advantage for such students, allowing them to study from the comfort of their homes. However, the institution is aware of specific issues faced by students with disabilities when following courses online, including:

- Students with learning disabilities (LD) or other "invisible" disabilities (e.g., Adult Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (AD/HD), etc.,) may be less likely to self-disclose their disability to the instructor due to the impersonal nature of the online environment.
- Due to the speed of reply required, synchronous discussions do not fairly assess the knowledge or skills of students with a disability.
- Graphics or visual media may not be accessible to students who are visually impaired, whereas text-heavy environments are challenging for students with reading disabilities and other types of LD or AD/HD, for example.

The following pedagogic approaches are adopted to assist students with disabilities to fully access and participate in online courses:

- Allow students to disclose their disability in a way that ensures privacy and encourages them to seek the accommodations they need to engage with the course materials;
- Design online learning environments in ways that are "amenable to accommodations" such as building in flexibility and choice of assignments for students to demonstrate the knowledge they have acquired and skills they have developed;
- Signal important information on course web sites to meet the needs of students who are visually impaired/physically disabled. For example, a brief introduction to a website could be provided that might include a written explanation of the site's layout in conjunction with a video with audio narration demonstrating the layout;

- Incorporate asynchronous discussion boards which are more accessible to all students since they do not include speed of reply as a factor in assessment in comparison to synchronous discussions;
- Ensure that the website and resources can be utilized with assistive technologies. Many students with disabilities use assistive technology such as alternative keyboards, text-to-speech software and screen magnifiers;
- Where possible, offer alternative media such as audio-taped books, Braille printouts and oral and written captions of visual information to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Measures that are utilised to encourage the active role of the students during the learning process, include:

- Engagement and interaction throughout the course of study via all channels available through the e-learning platform (e.g., chat, forum), as well as through group work with fellow students. The student-student and student-lecturer relationships are actively encouraged throughout the learning process.
- Active and on-going involvement of lecturers and tutors, through interactive didactics, including on a one-to-one basis, especially for students requiring additional support.
- Participation in the planning activities for new courses and the review of existing ones, in order to re-align the training offer.

The following are in relation to the utilised procedures on the subject matter:

1. The standardization of the preparation procedure related to the didactic material, aimed at the lecturers;
2. The institution's didactic model;
3. The responses arising from the annual survey on students' satisfaction, through an appropriate survey on the Quality Assurance system in force;
4. The survey, through the E-learning platform, for personal studies, carried out from the didactic material related to the course programmes, integrated by further and additional in-depth analysis;
5. The survey to lecturers and tutors in order to obtain additional feedback about the programmes' effectiveness and the students' level of preparation after attending the courses;
6. The interaction with the labour market (internships and apprenticeships);
7. Monitoring of each course of study;

8. The following methods will be utilised to monitor this process:

    a) Monitoring of customer satisfaction in relation to the services through the students' opinions survey;
    b) Periodical (at least once per semester) vetting of provision and delivery of didactic material;
    c) Analysis of recommendations and complaints received, for example those published on the institution's dedicated Facebook page;
    d) Processing of matters identified during the provision of service.

The support to the students, provided by the lecturers and tutors, consists of:

1. Assessment of the didactic quality, within the assessment policies practised by the Courses of Study;
2. Direct tutorial assistance, via input from the lecturers, facilitators focussed on the methodologies and others offering technical support;
3. Direct assistance, by the lecturers, for the study and preparation phase;
4. Direct assistance, by the lecturers, for the final thesis preparation phase;
5. Special support and/or guidance, by the lecturers, aimed at assisting students finding difficulties during their career path;
6. Platform interaction between the lecturer/tutor and students, through chat, forum, videoconference, etc.

Assessment

Assessment of student learning is a fundamental aspect of instruction and an important requisite for QA to guarantee complete transparency throughout the learning process. Special challenges exist in assessing student learning in online environments.
For all courses, assessment criteria and modes of assessment used during each stage of the learning process are published well in advance on PI's platform, and specifically within the following:

1. Schedules, namely the Course of Studies presentation schedule;
2. Course of Studies regulations;
3. Contract with the student, published on the website and also ~~handed~~ delivered directly to the student.
4. Other methods – see section 9 below.

The students will receive adequate feedback on their respective assessment, through:

- Direct assessments, via the E-learning platform, during the entry competences assessment phase. The institution evaluates the initial preparation of students who want to enrol on the study programmes. The test evaluates if the acquired knowledge during the educational pathway is adequate for the chosen degree course. The procedure entails the automatic assignment of lessons in order to cover identified gaps, as well as having the aim to monitor that the above mentioned gaps have been addressed. The evaluation test result does not hinder students' enrolment to the course. This test, in fact, gives access to the study course and helps to organize specific support activities for incoming students with possible preparation gaps. The test enrolment is immediate and simultaneous to the study programme registration. If the student does not pass the test, he is assigned an additional training obligation that implies necessary activities and further tests in order to certify that he has passed the additional training obligation.
- On-going assessments, through the E-learning platform, during the course of study; at the end of each video lesson students complete a multiple-choice self-assessment exercise and must obtain 80% of correct answers. Results are communicated immediately to the student. If a negative result is obtained, the system recommends that the test is carried out again, after students have deepened their study on the topics failed, and prevents the student from progressing towards the following lesson until the assessment test is passed. All such results can be printed out for the student to keep in a personal file, and are also saved on the system, to aid in the monitoring of the student's learning progress. Special integrated support with tutors and lecturers is provided for students with learning difficulties and disabilities. For technical and scientific study courses (e.g., Engineering) an intermediate test is performed consisting of on-line exercises, directly with tutors and lecturers, and the intermediate test result is given immediately.

Consistent and correct assessment is guaranteed for all students, since the multiple choice test requires an objective and automatic answer as it is not corrected manually. In addition, and this is also automated, students can only proceed to the exam if they have successfully completed 80% of the didactic load of each module.

In the case of degrees where a practical component is essential, students may be asked to demonstrate that they are currently in employment or involved in related practice where they are able to apply what they learnt during the course or carry out related research activities, to the satisfaction of the organisation. In the absence of this, arrangements for a practical research

project or a period of internship, will have to be agreed between student and organisation and shall be carried out by the student prior to being granted access to the final examination. This project and/or internship is intended to get students to test some of the concepts learnt in class within a real setting thus helping them to develop their abilities outside of a learning setting. Finally, through the successful completion of such task, the student should apply various qualitative and/or quantitative approaches in order to ascertain which technique would be suitable in particular situations.

All examinations are conducted by distance modality, through the e-learning platform. All examinations are almost always written and, when these are carried out orally, two assessors will carry out the examination. Coherent assessment is guaranteed through:

1. The collegial commitment of the Course of Study lecturers, during the planning phase of the said course that defines the assessment modalities in relation to the expected learning objectives;
2. Regular review, updating and re-alignment of the assessment criteria by lecturers, resulting from their on-going training and from on-going course reviews;
3. The didactic model in force;
4. The monitoring and coordination actions put in place by the Board of Study Courses in relation to the individual teachings and on the application of a coherent verification between the determined training objectives during the planning phase and the learning assessment modalities;
5. The vetting and monitoring in relation to the didactic material which actually entails, amongst others, the coherent verification between the educational objectives and learning verification modalities.

Continuous academic advice and guidance is offered to students via:

1. Information through the e-learning platform;
2. Information through the territorial centres that support students for orientation, administrative and didactic support;
3. The orientation on enrolment;
4. Ongoing support through students' secretariat;
5. A digital guide of the main Courses of Study Regulations (e.g., Modalities and timings to book exams, final exam management).
6. A digital guide for the use of the e-learning platform and of other technologies and tools.

In order to ensure that examiners are familiar with different assessment/examination methods, examiners are informed:

1. Through periodical updates and training for lecturers;
2. Through the coordination and monitoring of the lecturers' activity, especially during new teaching assignments, exercised by the institution's didactic coordination unit.
3. Through the coordination and recommendations that are directed toward the assessors/lecturers appraised during the monitoring activity by the Courses of Study collegial bodies.

Procedure for student complaints and appeals

Albeit that many student concerns may indeed be the result of nothing more than misunderstandings, it could, however, be the case that others are genuine cases of unfair treatment or misconduct. Although students will have recourse by filing an official complaint, they will usually be encouraged to first seek to resolve matters informally, In many cases, an informal and impartial discussion will generally lead to an amicable settlement.

If a student is still not satisfied, s/he is free to complete a Formal Complaints form, providing full details of the complaint, as well as any supporting evidence or documentation. Each complaint will be acknowledged and handled by management in strictest confidence. Depending on the nature of the complaint and/or against whom it is directed, the relevant parties will be notified in writing and, where appropriate, a copy of the complaint or excerpts of it shall be forwarded. Management will also ask both parties to provide a list of possible witnesses and any supporting evidence and/or documentation. A formal hearing will be arranged within 15 days from the date of notification of complaint. At the hearing, the student may be accompanied by a companion or representative, provided s/he gives due notice of this at least 7 days before the hearing.

For such proceedings, the Academic Committee shall appoint a chairperson and two other persons to serve on the Complaints Board. A secretary shall take minutes of the hearing. The chairperson may decide to proceed with the hearing in the unjustified absence of any of the parties.

Following conclusion of proceedings, the Complaints Board will issue a written communication with its decision and recommendations. The concerned parties will have recourse to appeal within 7 calendars days and the appeal will then follow a similar process to the above, with the case being heard directly by the Appeals Board constituted for the purpose.

5. Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

All the phases related to the student's life management cycle are timed and regulated in accordance to the following indications:

- Admission and registration – this is managed ~~either at the PI office or~~ through the official website. The registration to degree courses can be submitted on any day of the year. All the information including the Requirements for admission to the Degree Courses, the documents and procedures, costs and payments, study methods, etc., are specified through the website.
- Academic progression – Access to assessment results is available through the e-learning platform. The IT system registers the achievements of the students and keeps note of the ECTSs obtained.
- Recognition and certification – The final examination is conducted in distance modality, through the e-learning platform, and are in line with the principles of the exclusive candidate identification code, for the sake of procedural transparency and fairness of examinations, good administration practice and impartiality of assessment. After passing these exams and after the defence of the thesis, the final certificate is issued.

Entry procedures

1. **Higher Secondary School Certificate.** In order to be admitted to a bachelor degree course it is required to be in possession of a higher secondary school diploma after at least 12 years of schooling or of an equivalent academic certificate obtained abroad, which is recognised as being relevant and suitable, such as the relevant Level 4 qualifications. If a foreign certificate is not deemed equivalent, the student will need to undertake additional training obligations (e.g., a foundation course) assigned by the ~~Faculty~~ Academic Committee.
In order to be admitted to a master degree course, possession of a bachelor degree or of an equivalent academic certificate obtained abroad, which is recognised as being relevant and suitable, is required. If a foreign certificate is not deemed equivalent, the student will need to undertake additional training obligations (a bridging course) assigned by the Academic Committee.
In addition, PI recognises students' skills and knowledge acquired through previous training, education, work and/or life experience. Recognition of Prior Learning may result in exemptions that may benefit students in reducing the time spent in attending certain classes, undertaking assessments or relearning what s/he already knows.
2. **Knowledge verification test**. For courses requiring a higher scientific commitment, it is also required to be in possession of adequate basic knowledge and competences related to the field of

study. Because of this, the student has to undergo an entry verification test through the e-learning platform.

3. **Additional training obligation (ATO).** As already stipulated above, the lack of adequate academic requirements determines the necessity of an ATO (foundation course or bridging course) that the student will need to fulfil compulsorily with the modalities determined by the Academic Committee and, in any case. before the first year of the course. The student will be accepted conditionally, provided that s/he will take and pass all the exams integral to the ATO.

The information related to the student's progression is collected through the e-learning platform (the IT system will manage the distance learning as well as the administrative aspects); the system also automatically generates the statistics on the students' progression. These statistics constitute the main tools that enable the Board of Study Courses to monitor the didactic activities and intervene to remove any critical eventualities by effecting more in-depth analysis.

The principles regulating the subject matter are regulated and, as already clarified above (Standard no. 5.3), arise from the European Qualification Framework (EQF) principles. In fact, it is expected that "Competences acquired outside the organisation can be recognised in the following cases: when these are related to professional abilities and knowledge that are certified in accordance with the regulation currently in force on the matter; when it is related to abilities and knowledge that have matured during post-secondary level training activities with the participation of a university during its implementation and planning. The request for recognition will be assessed by the ECTS Recognition Committee taking into consideration the indication provided by the proposed Academic Bodies and the provision of the maximum recognition credits determined by the regulation in force. The recognition can occur if the activities are correlated with the specific training objectives of the Course of Studies after taking note of the content and duration, in hours, of the documented experiences".

Following the mechanisms for taking into account prior learning:

- PI supports, on the basis of the existing regulation, those students in possession of a wide experience obtained at work or in other fields of activity, facilitating the validation of formal and non-formal learning. In fact, the focus concentrated on learning allows the assessment of whether the obtained results, within the said context, are equivalent to the formal qualifications in terms of content and relevance.
- PI issues/will issue the supplement Diploma that constitutes the main international tool for the recognition and certification of the learning results, as opposed to the previous structure, through the simple issue of the study certificate, i.e., the Degree certificate.

- PI is committed to promote a higher mobility of students and workers, by allowing them to describe, more easily, their wide level of competences to potential employers in other countries. This will help employers to interpret the candidates' qualifications thus supporting the labour market mobility in Europe.

The issue of the Supplement Diploma will provide the graduate with a comprehensive overview of the certification awarded including:

- Information identifying the holder of the qualification
- Information describing the qualification
- Information on the level of the qualification
- Information on the contents and results gained
- Information on the function of the qualification
- Additional information
- Certification of the supplement
- Information on the National Higher Education System.

6. Teaching Staff

PI prides itself in selecting the best academic staff possible to teach its students. To meet special and individual educational needs, Pegaso International may stipulate private agreements with academics or experts, irrespective of their citizenship, with proven professional and scientific experience, appointed to teach a discipline relevant to the degree courses, or, rather, to carry out additional educational activities. Appointments may be entrusted to resident academics, or freelancers, with proven high scientific or professional experience. The high scientific experience must be certified by scientific publications related to the discipline, relevant research activities, eventual scholarships achieved and the award of Ph.D. qualifications.

Appointments may be directly assigned, subject to an evaluation procedure. The assessment is conducted according to criteria established by the Academic Committee in compliance with internationally recognized standards for quality and with particular regard to the evaluation of qualifications, professional and personal background, as well as publications.
The selection criteria include:

- Qualifications.
- Teaching experience.
- Experience/exposure in the subject area
- Experience in research grants.
- Peer-reviewed visibility (both national and international) including;
    - Books.
    - Journals.
    - International and National Conferences.
    - International and National Awards.
    - Participation in International Committees.
    - Election in Scientific Committees.
    - Participation in evaluation panels with regards to project selection.
    - Technical reports.
    - Participation in spin-offs.
    - Patents.
    - Consultancies with International and National entities.
    - Seminar or conference organiser.
    - Tutorials given.
    - Managing of EU funds.
    - Membership in professional bodies.
    - Others.

To ensure clear, fair and transparent processes, PI binds itself to adhere to:

- National and EU regulations.
- Internal Human Resources standards.

- Recommendations of the Academic Committee – chaired by the Rector and composed of ordinary, extraordinary and associate professors - whose remit includes the evaluation of documentation provided by the candidates.
- The Code of Ethics (in Appendix 2).

The teaching staff is provided with mandatory initial training on the following topics:
(a) the general principles of e-learning;
(b) use of the LMS platform;
(c) general Principles of quality assurance;
(d) principles of pedagogy;
(e) initial and on-going guidance in the didactic-training structure of PI;
(f) the main didactic procedures and the deadlines relating to the academic path;
(g) assistance on the training activities in the virtual lab, conducting mid-term tests, preparing for exams and the final examination;
(h) study support for students with special needs and specific learning disabilities;
(i) disciplined learning;
(l) social role and collaborative learning;
(m) management, organisation and coordination of the activities;
(n) tasks, rights and duties of the academic staff
(o) didactic regulations of the institution.

To monitor the teaching of the various lecturers, the following items are taken into consideration:

- The evaluation provided by the students through surveys compiled at the end of the module.
- Regular monitoring performed by the Academic Committee through random spot checks and scheduled online meetings focused on:
  - ✓ evaluation of the students' feedback
  - ✓ updates on the institutional academic procedures
  - ✓ any form of students' support
  - ✓ others.
- Regular monitoring by the QA Office.
- Alerts raised by students or staff members.

To ensure that staff members continue their professional development, PI binds itself to:

- Organise training programmes.
- Organise refresher courses and update contents within their teachings.
- Send regular memos containing updates.
- Support the participation of academics in both national and international events.

In order to promote the link between education and research:

- Academics are encouraged to transmit their knowledge to the students and to keep them abreast of the latest developments in the field.
- Academics are bound to review their lecture contents, presentations, resources and notes ~~once a year~~ on a regular and any time it is necessary, in order to keep them relevant to the most important advancements.
- Problem solving tasks and hands-on projects, which involve research in academic journals, are encouraged in order to provide a comprehensive learning experience for the student.
- When possible, lecturers should set up online communities of learning aimed at facilitating the sharing of information whilst eliciting live discussions and exchanges between students and experts.

The didactic commitments of the teaching staff are structured according to the didactic calendar and may also include orientation, tutoring and extra activities in addition to institutional didactic activities. As part of the hours dedicated to tutoring, they are required also to include the hours supervising the students participating in their didactic activities. These activities should be carried out continuously during the entire academic year, as set and published in the calendars available on the e-learning platform.

Each professor is responsible for compiling the "class register", wherein must be listed the topics of the lessons, exercises, seminars, lab activities and any other didactic activity relevant to the course.

For each discipline, a reference tutor is identified as responsible for supporting students in their online learning path. The tutor has the role to moderate a class discussion, helps to coordinate group activities and is a point of reference for each individual student.
The online tutor has four specific duties:

- **pedagogical support**: the tutor has the role of a learning facilitator, thus focusing on the key features of the course contents;
- **social support**: the tutor is required to enhance and develop collaborative learning;
- **managerial task**: the tutor is required to structure and coordinate the course;
- **technical assistance**: particular attention must be dedicated to the difficulties encountered by the students in approaching new technologies.

7. Learning Resources and Student Support

PI is committed to providing adequate and readily available learning resources for all students, commensurate with those reading for undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses, in order to assist student learning. The resources include:

- The institution's e-learning platform accessible from https://pegasointernational.eu/ which offers video lectures, fora, chat rooms, online quizzes, etc. The platform allows the organization and structuring of a virtual learning environment through which it is possible to provide online training courses and access a series of synchronous and asynchronous communication tools and related services. In addition to the possibility to download support material for the study, the user can interact with other users and tutors in real time through forums, chats and communities, in order to obtain continuous and constant support.
- Highly innovative learning software.
- A mobile app that addresses the various needs of the student, such as interpersonal relations, relations with the world of business, cultural and travel interests, advice and content-sharing.
- Technological infrastructure, such as computer laboratories, at various centres, utilised during student visits to these centres.
- Other technological infrastructure (physical and virtual), available through collaborations with other education institutions.
- Continuous tutoring and mentoring offered through the e-learning facilities of the online platform (such as chats, etc.). The tutor accompanies students throughout the academic and learning process ensuring continuity. The mentor is the student's personal trusted advisor; typically, academics from the Faculty who are assigned individually to each of the students and whose role is to mentor and advise the students throughout the duration of the course. They will help students decide on the choice of electives to follow, mode of learning, final dissertation, preparation for examinations and even on career choices after graduation;
- Supporting student services from the student secretariat.
- Supporting student technical services from the IT department.
- Virtual libraries and access to e-books, as well as through collaborations with physical libraries, scientific organisations, publishers and other institutions.
- Language learning centre.

Compared to traditional education institutions, allocations of resources are much easier for PI. As an education institution providing an online learning environment, most of the resources – indeed the key ones (such as the digital library, video lectures, transcripts, links to additional materials, online exercises, etc.)- are available to all students via the e-learning platform, while other resources (such as computer laboratories and the language learning centre) are provided to individual students, on a need basis. Each student is provided with a unique username and password to access these resources. As an example:

- Students carrying out research activities may require use of computer laboratories when visiting PI in order to continue or carry out academic work;
- The virtual, as well as the physical libraries are available to each student, researcher and teaching staff;
- Tutoring and mentoring services, as well as student support, are guaranteed and available to all students;
- The e-learning platform is available on a 24/7 basis to all students, researchers and staff, through personal usernames and passwords provided to them;
- Technological infrastructure (physical and virtual), available through collaborations with other educational institutions – access available to students.

Accessibility to online learning ("anywhere, anytime") offers a level playing field for all students and hence there are no substantial differences when it comes to student access. Both young and mature students, part-time and full-time, have the same student access (24/7) and, consequently, all aspects of student diversity are planned for and in operation. Those challenged by mental or physical disabilities are integrated into PI's educational system and the e-learning platform is accessible to such students as well, in line with international accessibility standards for such vulnerable groups.

The arrangements in place to support students who encounter other difficulties in their studies also include:

1. Scholarships for students with financial difficulties.
2. Discounts for students with physical disabilities.
3. Support and tutorial support for students struggling with their studies.
4. Specialised technological learning support for students with physical disabilities.
5. On-line assistance by the lecturer and tutor.

Students are informed of the available resources and support through:

- The VLE.
- The orientation sessions on enrolment.
- The agreement with the Student.
- The student support offered through the student secretariat.
- The relationship between the tutor, the mentor and the facilitator with each student.

- The communications between fellow students, via the various facilities (chat, forum, etc.) of the e-learning platform.
- Notifications via the VLE.
- Information available at the various centres cooperating with PI.
- The institution's advertising.

The PI educational offer is based on an educational model characterized by a solid didactic and pedagogical awareness, supported by original and advanced technological tools and focused on the following basic paradigms.

- The centrality of the student, understood as a person with experiences to be valued, even before following cognitive and exploratory resources.
- An educational pathway that is measured within the cognitive transfer of life experiences.
- The effective evaluation that involves students along transversal axes, enhances the cognitive possession and, therefore, the ability to use the knowledge learned personally.
- The multimedia and multi-channel techniques which is the outcome of the teaching technological equipment, an internal style of the lesson organization and, therefore, a fundamental and primary condition of full participation in the cultural environment.
- The technological resources available on the platform allow the teaching staff to accurately monitor learning, a series of ongoing checks, the activation of integrative paths structured as feed-back devices, activated by critical moments detected along the student's path.

Such teaching model becomes an opportunity for the student, a space for professional growth and the entire academic community. They become part of the interactive teaching through:

1. the didactic interventions addressed by the lecturers/tutors in the form of demonstrations or additional explanations present in FAQs, mailing lists or web forums (for example, demonstrations or operational suggestions on how to solve a problem, exercise and similar matters);
2. brief interventions made by the students (for example, in discussion or collaboration environments: web forum, blog, wiki);
3. structured e-activities (individual or collaborative), typically in the form of a report, exercise, case study, problem solving, web quest, project, production of artefact (or similar variants), carried out by the students.

In order to effectively implement the interactive teaching, guidelines are prepared for lecturers and control mechanisms are activated with the aim of stimulating interactivity and the realization of group work. The activities planned by the lecturers are implemented directly on the platform with the support of the technical staff and tutors. Students' participation in interactive teaching activities is also supported by the tutor for that discipline.

A series of interactive tools (forum, blog, case studies and project work) are used in order to allow students to share innovations, knowledge on experiences and good practices, directly and

concretely applicable to the labour market. The role of the lecturer is therefore transformed into that of a real consultant who filters the didactic contents trying to re-elaborate them in order to respond to the professional needs of the learners.

The tutors are experts, with experience gained in the university environment, disciplinary skills on the subjects taught and a good knowledge of information technologies. Furthermore, the tutors are good communicators in order to coordinate and "animate" the virtual class, building a social context of collaborative learning. Their tasks can be summarized in the triptych 'reception-information-orientation': they offer 'targeted' advice based on the practical experience of university life, managing to establish an 'empathic' contact with the students.

The tutor must therefore have:

- specific discipline skills;
- specific professional skills;
- organizational skills;
- communication and relational skills;
- pedagogical and didactic skills.

Therefore, four areas of competence of the tutor are identified, namely the pedagogical, social, organizational-procedural, and technical. Consequently, the role of the online tutor can be understood to encompass that of e-tutor instructor, e-tutor facilitator, e-tutor moderator/animator.

The tutoring activities and the mix of skills necessary for their implementation may vary in relation to multiple factors, such as the aims to be achieved, the specific needs of the students, the characteristics of the Degree Course, the type of teaching, etc.

Student-tutor interactivity is mainly carried out in three forms:
1) guidance/advice;
2) monitoring of the overall performance of the class;
3) coordination of the student group.

The guiding/consulting role basically consists of supporting the student to improve understanding of the contents. This activity can be carried out through the creation of virtual spaces of interactivity: one to many, synchronous and asynchronous (forums, web conferences, live sessions, etc.) or, in the case of requests for personalized clarifications, via e-mail.

The types of tutors that PI selects for the support of its students are the following:
a) Discipline tutors guide and advise the student and support them in virtual classrooms in their understanding of the contents of the specific courses;
b) Methodology Tutors carry out orientation actions for students, offer support in administrative aspects and monitor the overall progress of the class;

c) Technical tutors carry out technical support actions for students: introduction and familiarization of the student with the technological environment, registration of accesses, storage of materials, ongoing technical assistance.

8. Information Management

Information management, including collating, analysis, monitoring and evaluation of information relevant to student and staff is easier for an education institution offering online courses and e-learning opportunities, in comparison to traditional education institutions. Indeed, through the e-learning platform, PI has appropriate arrangements in place for the systematic collection, analysis and evaluation of key information about its students and staff. Every interaction with the platform is recorded; thus, if the user is watching a video lecture, downloading notes or even interacting with other users online, this information is recorded. Furthermore, the platform produces statistics, which are then analysed by the administrators. These might include information about the usage of the platform or participation in online debates. This information is important because through it, the organisation can ascertain if the student is following a course or not and if facing any difficulties (e.g., through the results achieved in the self-assessment modules).

Through the e-learning platform, relevant data related to students and graduates is collated regularly and systematically (after appropriate permissions are obtained from students and/or staff members. These permissions are obtained by asking the user to digitally sign an online user agreement which specifies how the organisation will make use of the data), including:

- Personal data of undergraduate and post graduate students (age, gender, educational level);
- Geographic origin;
- Employment details;
- Career (general career progression, number of credits earned, average user rating, duration of studies, examination students, etc.).

In relation to the graduates, the following data is collated:

For each Degree Course:

- Final mark/s achieved in each module.
- Duration.

In addition, on a personal level:

- Personal data (age, gender, educational level);
- Geographic origin
- Employment details.

The above allows the possible collation, evaluation and analysis of statistics and other information that will assist the monitoring of the didactic process. Every academic year, analyses such as those below are carried out:

- Overall student population, as well as for each course;
- Geographical origin, overall and for each course;
- Average accrued credits, overall and for each course;
- Average grades obtained, overall and for each course;
- Number of graduates, overall and for each course;
- % of students who graduate within the time planned for each course;
- % of students who do not graduate within time planned (categorised into 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 years and more);
- Tracer studies.

The e-learning platform also enables PI to keep continuous track of each student following each course, each identified by an encrypted serial number and identification code. The information collated may be accessed by and shared with different officials of PI (with appropriate access authorisations and login credentials) via a user-friendly dashboard.

As a direct benefit of the resources, knowledge and experience that PI benefits from its cooperation agreement with its parent organisation UTP, it is also worth noting that the system also currently allows the querying of up to 23 different QA indicators related to a student's education progression (based on national standards in Italy provided by MFHEA's Italian counterpart, ANVUR, and used continuously by PI's parent organisation UTP). The results of queries may be extracted in tabular form or as graphical representations. The 23 indicators emanate from the latest updated official national document of ANVUR, entitled, "Sistema di indicatori sulle carriere accademiche degli studenti 2015", and include:

1. Average annual number of ECTS / student.
2. Percentage of students in the second year with X ECTS.
3. Number of Credits of Students enrolled in the study for 2 years / student.
4. Graduation rate (percentage of graduates within the normal duration of the course of study I and II level).
5. Dropout rate from degree courses.
6. Share of working students.
7. Share of students off course (students enrolled in the course for a number of years higher than the normal duration of the course of study).
8. Share of inactive students.
9. Average period of time for graduation.
10. Career progression.

11. Rapport between teachers & students in homogeneous areas of training.
12. Percentage of courses with entry test.
13. Ratio of the number of credits earned abroad against registered students.
14. Ratio of students in international mobility for more than three months against registered students.
15. Ratio of students with more than 15 credits earned abroad against registered students.
16. Academics in international mobility (personnel / months, in and out).
17. International PhD courses.
18. Institution funds (non-Erasmus) for international mobility.
19. Courses and teaching in the target language.
20. Ratio of students from another university against registered post-graduate students at the institution enrolled in Master's degree programmes (alternative to item 17).
21. Questions from students.
22. Results of the Quality Assurance process.

PI will in due course make use of many of these indicators. For example, employment rates and career progression paths taken by graduates will of course become very useful and important to PI in the future.

Monitoring of each student's educational activities is a continuous process. This is an important role played by the tutor, which allows officials of PI, among other things, to focus on those students who may from time to time be struggling with their educational progress or with examinations, the progression of students with disabilities and other vulnerable students.

PI also systematically collates, analyses and evaluates students' participation, retention and success rates through surveys carried out through the e-learning platform, as part of the annual review of courses. This is carried out with the participation of students and teaching staff members either through the online platform or through phone calls if the person is not answering the online questionnaire or by sending email reminders. Through such measures, regularity of attendance, progression of students and exit routes of students are analysed and information on students who progressed normally through each course is collated and evaluated as a percentage of total student cohort per course, as for those who have delayed their course completion.

9. Public Information

As an online institution, PI provides its website as its primary source of information for prospective students wishing to enrol on its courses and for all other stakeholders. Indeed, on its website, apart from a whole array of useful information covering all activities of the institution, one can also find practically all the institution's official documents including but not limited to:

- Licence enabling PI to operate as an institution;
- Academic/educational regulations and guidelines;
- Regulations and guidelines with respect in regard to the accountability, examinations, postgraduate studies, research activities, disciplinary procedures; enrolment procedures, complaints procedures and so on
- Student contract;
- General Regulations

and for each course:

- Title of Course
- Qualification and Qualification level
- Number of ECTSs
- Duration of course
- Study plan, including a list of modules covered each year and number of ECTSs per module
- For each module
    - Module code
    - CVs of the current lecturers
    - Email addresses of the current lecturers
    - Language of instruction
    - Syllabus
    - Learning outcomes
- Course objectives
- Assessment procedures and criteria
- Teaching methodology
- Entry requirements
- Future career opportunities
- Fees and terms of payment
- Details regarding on-the-job training, internships, dissertations, pass rates relevant to each course, etc.

Much of the above information will emanate from the information in the application for accreditation of such course with the MFHEA. PI's plans include publishing of this information as soon as possible after the course has been accredited by the MFHEA. From time to time, information is also provided on the website, as well as on the e-learning platform, on events such as seminars, workshops and other activities that may be of interest to students, providing them with further learning opportunities for their studies and also networking opportunities for their future career and education development.

The information is checked regularly by officers of the relevant faculty, as well as by lecturers, and updated as and if necessary by the technical officer/s responsible for the website, following communication between both sides.

PI is satisfied that the information made available on its website will enable prospective students to take well-informed decisions on their future academic development. Surveys carried out from time to time among students and lecturers help PI to continuously enhance its educational offers, as well as the information provided on them.

In addition, its officers are always available to assist prospective students through the enrolment process, showing them where to access the information they may be seeking. To take care of this process, an Admissions Committee is appointed by the Academic Committee. This committee is made up of at least 3 academics of PI and their role is to follow the entire process and ensure that it is followed correctly. The procedure for enrolment involves the following:

1. An Admissions committee will assess each application and determine whether or not an applicant's previous education and/or work experience allows him/her to follow his/her preferred course of study.
2. Since PI courses are online, and since there is no restriction on admission numbers, there are no selection criteria nor is there the need to place applicants on waiting lists. Indeed, each applicant found to satisfy the entry requirements will be accepted and enrolled; a letter of acceptance or an email will inform the applicant accordingly.
3. The Admissions Committee will assess borderline cases on a case-by-case basis and their decision will be communicated to the applicant by way of a letter of acceptance or rejection. Requests by the applicant for re-consideration will, likewise, also trigger a re-assessment by the Admissions Committee, together with any other information, documentation/evidence and argumentation that the applicant may consider relevant. Following evaluation of the request for re-consideration, the Admission Committee shall communicate its decision, which shall be final.
4. Since applicants may submit either local or overseas certificates in support of their application, a recognition/equivalence exercise may have to be carried out through the MQRIC office of the MFHEA.
5. Official translations of same and/or official transcripts may also have to be requested.

In addition to the above information being available on PI's website, as already stated above, PI may from time to time organise events such as seminars and information meetings On these occasions, leaflets on its educational offers, containing the above information, will be printed and distributed to attendees and other interested parties.

It should be pointed out that, over recent years, PI's parent organisation UTP has established a nationwide network of 600 branch offices, called e-learning centre points (ECPs), which are set up across all of Italy. These not only act as contact points to serve the local needs of the labour market, schools, universities and professionals, but, more importantly, as walk-in offices to hand-hold students through the registration process. All of these ECPs will promote the courses of PI

and will provide prospective students with the above-listed information on each of its courses. Officers in these centres will make use of the PI website as their primary source of information.

The above is in-keeping with the culture of its parent organisation UTP, which has been using its website as its primary source of information, publishing practically all its documents, since inception.

In addition to the above mentioned Italian ECPs, in order to foster the development of its didactic activities and study areas, PI has identified new orientation centres and educational providers distributed throughout the world. They belong to the PI Network and are therefore authorized to facilitate students' orientation and support, in the enrolment process in Pegaso International study programmes, as well as for facilitating contacts with local institutions. They are centres that represent Pegaso International worldwide and spread its values and principles. They play an active role in the dissemination of, engagement in and access to academic education and help students to choose the study path that best suits them, as well as assist them with administrative procedures. Such Country Managers are former educational providers, recognised and licensed in their own countries, and therefore educational centres with grounded knowledge of the territory and in line with the requirements of quality and reliability. An updated list of such centres is published on the PI institutional website.

10 On-going Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes

The Monitoring and Periodic Review (MPR) conducted by PI is an on-going process whereby the institution self-evaluates its programmes. To do so, it will make use of processes already in place as well as statistics provided by the e-learning platform. This will ensure that PI not only reaches its set objectives with regards to quality in the design, development and delivery of programmes of study but that its content is up-to-date and centred around the student's needs. Such a process will ensure that PI can strengthen its educational offer within the international domain whilst offering a richer learning environment to all of its students.

To reach such objectives, documentation, in the form of policies and procedures, is vital since what cannot be measured, cannot be managed. Hence, procedures are in place to ensure that all the related data is collected and collated. This will be subsequently presented to external auditors for comments thus providing PI with an external opinion on its effectiveness on an International level.

The MPR is not just an internal exercise involving the application of the existent quality procedures but it is intended to go one step further by creating a virtual forum with all the stakeholders involved. These include all those people and organisations that have some sort of interest or are effected (both directly and indirectly) by PI's programmes. Through this channel, PI can ensure that the various stakeholders are involved in all the processes and can influence its educational offers.

The Quality Cycle will be based on four main processes;

- Plan – the actions, which need to be taken. This is achieved by identifying appropriate and measureable goals, together with the actions that need to be taken. At this stage it is also important to identify key performance indicators in order to measure the success of any adjustments being proposed.
- Implement – the changes defined in the planning stage. These implementations vary and might include the development of new procedures, collection of new resources, involvement of particular stakeholders, development of new content, etc.
- Evaluate – the information which has been collected. Primarily, the information has to be collected from the statistics generated through the online platform together with other information (such as that derived from surveys, etc.). Secondly, the scope of the evaluation has to be defined and a critical discussion extracted based upon the information previously collected.
- Review – whether the intended goals have been reached. This process will then analyse the evaluation document and propose amendments where necessary aimed at achieving the pre-set targets. It is important at this stage to learn from the information obtained and where necessary analyse further even with external stakeholders (such as industry partners).

As indicated earlier, programme reviews are undertaken regularly, however, a full MPR will be conducted once every 5 years in order to coincide with a full cycle of an undergraduate and a postgraduate degree. In so doing, PI can analyse an entire cohort of students. PI will analyse the whole cohort by gathering information throughout the years of the student's performance. They will be followed from their initial contact with PI up to after they finish their studies. Once all of this information is collated, a thorough analysis is performed every five years. This should include information about the:

1. Quality of the teaching
2. The learning process
3. Quality of the academic activities
4. The effectiveness of the administration

The scope of the MPR will cover both the undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. It will ensure that the learning outcomes defined for each course are met by checking that the students did actually learn the content being taught (through the results obtained in the exams). It will provide educators with the opportunity to update the content of their programmes, thus ensuring up-to-date information. The course content will be sent to independent reviewers (both within and outside PI). Lecturers will benefit from outside and independent feedback obtained from the various stakeholders, thus encouraging them to adopt best practices.

To perform the MPR, an *ad hoc* MPR Committee (MPRC) is set up by the Academic Committee. The MPRC will be made up of the following people:

- Two representatives of PI
- Two external professionals
- A student representative

The information to be collected for the process includes (where possible):

- Information related to the various courses (Title, People involved, Length, Mode, etc.) which is already available at PI's office.
- A self-review document requested from each board of studies (Students, Analysis, Consistency, Aims, Learning Outcomes, Curriculum, Assessment, etc.)
- Summary of the external reports (Best practices, Challenges, Changes, etc.).
- Feedback from students (Progression, Communication, Academic support, Guidance, Facilities, Diversity, Disabilities, Resources, etc.) obtained from the online platform.
- Perception of academics involved (Perceptions, Training, Expertise, Communication, etc.) collected through questionnaires distributed via the online platform.

- Information pertaining to alumni (Experience, Career Path, Recruitment, Development, etc.).
- External organisations that have a vested interest in the course are requested to provide their feedback (issues, comments, changes, etc.).

This information is then collated in one document and analysed by the MPRC. It is the duty of the committee to provide a balanced report, which offers a true and fair evaluation of the course taking into consideration the various stakeholders. The outcome of this exercise should include:

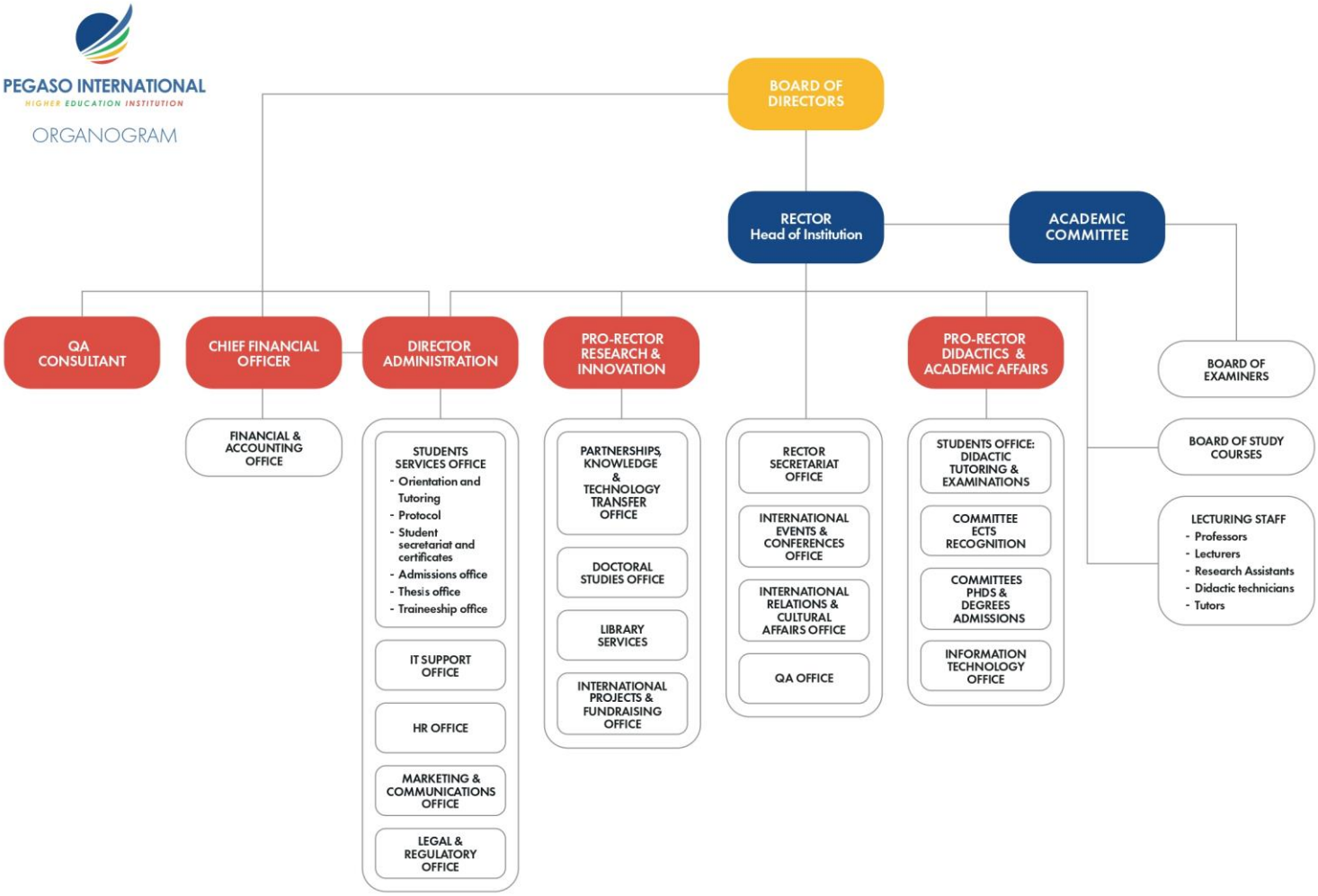
1. A list of best practices
2. A list of recommended improvements

Any changes deemed important by the MPRC should have a specified timeframe and PI is bound to implement them within the time specified. The person responsible to implement each change is first of all identified and tasked with implementing it within a specified time frame. The request is sent via email and followed up through face-to-face meetings with the individuals concerned.

11 Cyclical External Quality Assurance

PI binds itself to undergo an external quality assurance process, with the approval of the MFHEA and according to its regulations. In so doing, it will ensure that its educational offer is always up-to-date and provides the highest quality [earning experience possible to its students.

Appendix 1 – Organogram



President	**Roles and Responsibilities:** The President is the ceremonial head of PI, whose primary role is to ensure that the board has a strategic focus and represents the best interests of the institution. The incumbent confers with the Board of Directors to formulate strategies and programmes concerning organisational, operational and academic functions of PI and oversees their execution. The President should preferably have at least 10 years' experience in the field of educational leadership. The incumbent is currently the owner of PI and its mother company UTP.
Board of Directors	**Roles and Responsibilities:** The Board of Directors has a strategic focus on PI's performance, working with the President in developing and overseeing the its priorities and strategic plans. The Board of Directors is also tasked to represent and protect the long-term best interests of PI, as well as to foster PI-SAR 2021 14 ethical and responsible decision making, appropriate oversight of administration and best practices in governance. Members of the Board of Directors are trustworthy persons, generally appointed by virtue of their role within PI, including the non-resident and resident legal representatives/coadministrative directors of PI and/or on the basis of strategic academic partnerships. **Minimum Qualifications & Experience: The directors are trustworthy persons, appointed by the shareholder/s**
Administrative Director	**Roles and Responsibilities:** The Director Administration is directly responsible for all administrative operations. In partnership with the Board of Directors, the incumbent is responsible for developing short and long-range planning of administrative and financial goals and objectives, coordinates, manages and implements all PI's functions and carries out strategic support initiatives and other special projects, as directed by the Board. One of the primary functions of the Director Administration is to assist students in achieving their educational goals by maintaining and providing accurate records, by providing an effective process, from registration to graduation, and by evaluating students' academic progress according to established curricular requirements in compliance with academic policies. The Director Administration is also tasked to collaborate with other members of top management in the planning and delivery of services and programmes and collaborating with administrators, academics and other members of staff to facilitate and improve services to students, while protecting the integrity and security of student academic data. **Minimum Qualifications & Experience:** The Director Administration should be in possession of a qualification at EQF Level 7 in management or a related subject area and have 10 years' experience working within a management or other administrative post.

Academic Commitee	**Roles and Responsibilities:** The Academic Committee, which took over from the Technical Organisation Committee as of 2020, is responsible for regulating and directing the academic work of the institution, including appointing Boards of Examiners. Acting in an advisory capacity to the Board of Directors, the Academic Committee is responsible for overseeing all academic matters, including the approval of new courses and the supervision and discipline of students. It also has responsibility to direct, regulate and promote research. Other specific duties of the Academic Committee include the approval of the conferment of degrees by PI. The Academic Committee may delegate its work to a series of sub-committees chaired by senior academic staff. Chaired by the Rector, the Academic Committee's membership comprises the Pro-Rectors, the Director Administration, nominated members of academic staff and representatives of the student body.
Rector	**Roles and Responsibilities:** The Rector is the head of the institution with responsibility for its overall activities, in accordance with the strategy, framework and requirements determined by the Board of Directors. The Rector reports to the Board of Directors and is the primary link between the board and other academic and administrative staff members. As indicated in the organogram, the incumbent provides executive leadership in assisting other top management members in the overall planning, organising and controlling of the academic programme areas, including the Board of Study Courses and lecturing staff, and administrative functions; and is also tasked with being an inspiration and the driving force that manages change processes, strategic development and implementation, including the nurturing of a quality culture through various quality measures, not least of which is internal audit. The Rector is also responsible for overseeing the building of networks with central partners in the educational sector, business and industry, as well as public authorities. **Minimum Qualifications & Experience:** A person with an EQF level 8 qualification and **a minimum of 10 years' experience working within an academic institution, preferably in a leadership role.**
Pro-Rectors	**Roles and Responsibilities:** The Pro-Rectors advise and assist the Rector in all academic matters and provide leadership to the academic-related areas of the institution as well as deputise for and represent the Rector and PI, as necessary. Among the many responsibilities of the position, the Pro-Rectors oversee their respective areas of research and innovation, including knowledge

and technology transfer, international relations and cultural affairs, international projects/fund raising; and, didactics and academic affairs, including academic planning, academic programme review and curriculum development. The incumbents are also responsible for developing professional and quality-oriented management throughout the organisation, as well as developing a positive and inclusive organisational culture and a good working environment for students, fellows, researchers and staff. The Pro-Rectors are also tasked with providing leadership in creating and maintaining academic standards and policies.

Minimum Qualifications & Experience: The Pro-Rectors should be in possession of a qualification at EQF Level 8 and have at least 10 years' experience working within an academic institution, preferably in a management/leadership role.

Chief Financial Officer

Roles and Responsibilities: The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for managing and executing activities related to finance and procurement, payroll and salaries, as well as other general office administration, to ensure effective performance management and smooth operations of PI, which will ultimately contribute to meeting the objectives of the institution.

Minimum Qualifications & Experience: The Chief Financial Officer should be in possession of a relevant qualification at EQF Level 7 in accounting or a related subject area and have 10 years' experience working within a financial management or other administrative post.

QA Consultant

Roles and Responsibilities: The QA Consultant serves as an independent appraisal function for PI. This function is responsible for providing an independent appraisal of PI's activities, not only financial and operational, but also where academic and research activities are concerned. Its mission is to provide independent, objective assurance and consulting services that evaluate the effectiveness of risk management, internal control and governance processes, thus adding value and improving the operations of PI. The Office serves as a central point for the coordination of and oversight for activities that promote accountability, integrity and efficiency within PI. The QA Consultant consults the rector and reports to the President and Board of Directors. This role assists all levels of administration and academia in the achievement of goals and objectives and has extensive liaison with and provision of advice to PI. It is also crucial in ensuring PI's compliance with educational legislation.

Minimum Qualifications & Experience: The QA Consultant should be in possession of a qualification at EQF Level 7, as well as relevant Internal Auditor certification with at least 10 years' experience working within a management or other administrative post. Experience in an academic setting would also be considered an asset. Such personnel could be engaged on a consultancy basis.

Appendix 2 – Code of Ethics

INTRODUCTION

The Code of Ethics highlights the rights together with the moral duties and defines the ethical-social responsibility of every person within the organization. It is the main tool through which we implement and ensure work ethics, which everyone must protect and preserve through their own behaviour, through the respect they show and through the image, which they portray.

BEHAVIOUR IN THE WORK PLACE - GENERAL GUIDELINES

1 - MUTUAL RESPECT

Successful organizations have one aspect in common: they have people who share a passion for their own job and work together towards a common objective. To create and support a spirit of collaboration, every person who collaborates with Pegaso International should carry out duties and obligations with the utmost respect.

Offering help and support for any activity when necessary;

Fostering a positive environment in which everyone has the possibility to learn and to grow professionally;

Zero tolerance for unlawful or violent behaviour;

Promoting an equal opportunity workplace;

Developing impartial and constructive assessment of employees;

Equal pay for equal job;

Promoting a healthy work-life balance.

Pegaso International believes in the importance of the individual. For this reason, prejudice or discriminatory attitudes are not tolerated irrespective of nationality, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, political or religious beliefs.

2 - TRAINING AND ADVANCEMENT OF CAREER

Pegaso International invests in its people in order to allow everyone to reach his full potential whilst creating the ideal conditions to retain the best professionals. Each individual is responsible for his own education. This is also facilitated by the managerial staff that can propose, in agreement with the individual, customised training paths. Every manager is entrusted to evaluate and do whatever possible to request training for his staff members with the aim to guarantee appropriate career progression. Similarly, each colleague must communicate to his own superior his training needs. The managers must deal with all reasonable requests related to training.

3 - HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT

Everyone within Pegaso International must ensure that the work place adheres fully to the national and European health & safety regulations. It is important; therefore, to be always vigilant of any potential hazard and when one is spotted, immediate action should be taken in order to get it fixed. This would normally involve reporting the potential hazard to the direct superior so that the issue can be escalated further without further delays.

4 - USE OF BUSINESS RESOURCES

Pegaso International provides all staff members with the necessary tools in order to ensure an effective workplace (such as telephones, photocopiers, printers, computers, Internet access, computer software, etc.). These resources belong to Pegaso International and they must be used exclusively for work purposes. The occasional and limited use of these resources for personal reason is acceptable, provided that they are not abused and with the limit of one's own common sense. Those people who make personal and indiscriminate use of the resources provided by the corporation can be reported to the disciplinary board and might also get dismissed. In case of any doubts, it is recommended to discuss the matter with a superior in order to establish if the personal use of these resources is appropriate.

5 - RESPONSIBILITY, INDEPENDENCE AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The respect of the legal ethical obligations to avoid conflicts of interest and to act with overall professional loyalty towards Pegaso International is a fundamental presupposition for the growth of the same corporate body. This means that the interests of Pegaso International must come before any other professional or personal interest. Staff members must ensure that their behaviour does not jeopardize in any way their ethical and legal obligations towards the organisation.

Specifically, all personnel are not allowed to:

- Take personal advantage of the opportunities that might arise during the professional activity without first getting the written approval from management;

- Accept any participation in any other organization not connected with Pegaso International without first getting the written approval from management;

- Participate in discussions on behalf of Pegaso International with other organizations in which they have a personal (which might include but not limited to family members such as spouse, father, mother, sister, brother, child or daughter) or material interest, without first getting the written approval from management;

- Participate in activities on behalf of Pegaso International that can negatively influence an independent and objective attitude. To employ, punish, dismiss or to undertake any other claim related to the state of employment of a colleague with which there is a direct relationship;

When in doubt, it is advisable to always refer the matter to one's superior in order to obtain clearance.

Liability and conflict of interest

1. In accordance with its founding principles, the organisation is autonomous and pluralistic, free from conditioning and independent of any external interest. It requires its members to observe, whilst carrying out their tasks, the principles of fairness and impartiality, to oversee the exclusive interest of the institution and avoid situations of conflict of interest.
2. Conflict of interest occurs when the private, personal or professional interest of a decision-maker contrasts with the principle of impartiality and in particular when private interest precedes the interests of the organisation.
3. When appointing its representatives in bodies, companies and other bodies, the organisation tried to avoid any possible conflict and to act in the sole interest of the Institution.
4. The organisation encourages everyone to report any conflict of interest.

Protection of organisation's name and image

1. Pegaso International requires all members to respect the name and prestige of the institution and to refrain from behaviours that can damage its image. It is not permitted to use the name and logo of the institution for non-institutional purposes.
2. Members of staff cannot release information, public statements, etc. in the name of the institution without authorization. They do not express personal opinions on behalf of the institution.

3. Members of staff should use all means of communication in a correct way and in respect of the institution and the confidentiality of people whilst avoiding the spread of information, texts or images that may damage the institution's name and prestige.
4. The institution requires all members of staff to maintain a respectful attitude towards the prestige and image of the institution, even in the use of "social media".

Protection of privacy and personal data

1. When processing personal data, the institution shall respect the rights, fundamental freedoms and dignity of the person concerned. Staff members should use information on activities, protect data confidentiality and respect the secrecy of the office.
2. The institute is committed to ensure balance between the fundamental freedoms and the monitoring needs necessary for the institute to perform its functions.

6 - CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION AND THE RIGHT OF PRIVACY

Pegaso International stores large amounts of confidential information, which is vital for the smooth running of our operations. Because of this, we take great care to protect and maintain it. This data might include (but not limited to):

- Personal documents;
- Contracts and agreements;
- Business Plans;
- Marketing strategies, services or costs;
- Financial results before publication;
- Information related to fusions, acquisitions, dismissals or negotiations.

The destruction or the inappropriate spreading of confidential information can damage in meaningful way the organisation. For this reason, it is imperative that all those people who work for the institution must protect the data by undertaking all the necessary actions in order to safeguard it.

Similarly, it is important to respect the rights and the dignity of all the staff members. Although it is important to gather and store specific pieces of information, the organisation stores the minimum required information according to law. It is also important to note that only the personnel expressly authorized by management can access and use such information.

7 - DOCUMENTATION

Documentation represents an essential part of the activity of Pegaso International. Documentation might include (but not limited to) e-mails, voice mails, computer files, financial

records, contracts and legal drafts. The documentation must be preserved in compliance with the provisions of the law and special care must be taken with regards to its creation, use, filing and disposal. When in doubt regarding the management of documentation released by the university, it is recommended to consult with one's superior.

8 – FINANCING AND GRANTS

Pegaso International does not provide grants or financing, to political parties and movements. Neither to individual candidates or grants devolved to supporting visible or hidden political and ideological corporations.

9 - REPORTING

When a colleague intentionally or unintentionally does not adhere to the Code of Ethics or to its fundamental values, everyone has the duty to alert about such conduct. In such cases, it is important to take the following actions:

a) Try to avoid the problem altogether in the first place.

b) If possible, discuss the matter with the colleague in order to dissuade him to take actions that could violate the law or the rules of Pegaso International.

c) Inform a superior.

d) Examine the matter with a superior. Almost all problems can and must be managed by him. If this is not possible, then it is suggested to communicate the situation to another responsible person.

e) To inform Human Resources. An essential aspect of such office is to guarantee assistance in such cases.

f) To inform legal office. In the legal office, there are experienced professionals in the legal field. There is no legal request that cannot be satisfied by the legal office or by other experts with which they collaborate.

g) To inform security. The internal security agency is independent and endowed with surveillance powers and, therefore, in charge of supervision.

Pegaso International, in fact, recognizes the importance of the implementation of an efficient and effective system of internal surveillance as an essential condition so as to carry out of its own academic activities in compliance with this code.

10 - SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Pegaso International is against any type of sexual harassment and/or behaviour, which is indecent, or not in good taste. All undesirable comments of sexual nature, unwanted physical contact and explicit or implied questions to offer or to receive sexual favours are all considered as sexual harassment. So is the transmission and/or projection of explicit e-mails, and erotic or pornographic images on screens and screensavers of the machines belonging to Pegaso International.

11 - GOOD BEHAVIOUR

There are also some best practices of good behaviour that everybody should adhere to in order to ensure civil cohabitation, responsibility and the fostering of good interpersonal relationships.

- If music is listened to, choose soft music and maintain a low volume;

- Even if smoking is forbidden, in cases in which a room is used for smoking, never forget to respect others; and do not take advantage of the possibility that is granted, to leave the workplace;

- Besides smoking, other distractions from the job such as coffee breaks with colleagues, web surfing for personal motives or the habit of chatting with friends, acquaintances and relatives during office hours should be kept to an absolute minimum and they should not impinge on one's output;

- Always knock before entering an office if the door is closed and wait to be invited to enter before opening it. Before speaking, ask whether it is the right time to discuss a particular issue;

- Complaints and criticisms should be done in private and directly to the person responsible;

- Try to keep good relations with everybody and to welcome with gentleness and consideration new colleagues;

- When talking to a superior regarding an office problem, introduce it as a professional problem and not as a personal one. Talk of the problem calmly and with diplomacy without blaming anybody, accept criticisms and always look towards possible improvements;

12 – ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND ETHICAL CONDUCT IN RESEARCH AND LEARNING

1. The organisation recognizes the autonomy of scientific research and the freedom as fundamental values for the development and spreading of knowledge. It undertakes to promote an institutional and scientific environment suitable to support permanent education, exchange relationships in the national and international academic scientific community, with the aim of reaching excellence.
2. The organisation promotes responsible and high-quality teaching and research activities through the pursuit of the best internationally standards, the enhancement of individual skills and experiences, and the continuous enrichment of knowledge. It ensures the development of training programs aimed at strengthening and defending ethical values and academic integrity; it also encourages discussion and confrontation on ethical issues of interest to the community.

Teaching activities and relations with students

1. The organisation recognizes students as the central component of its system and because of this, all of its activities (promoting high-level educational and professional training courses, taking into account the needs expressed by society as a whole, etc.) are directed towards them. It also supports access to higher education through the removal of any obstacles in collaboration with other universities, national and international training institutes.
2. The relationship between teachers and students is inspired by the principles of integrity, trust, collaboration and mutual fairness, respect for the person, equal opportunity and absence of any discrimination.
3. With regards to the students, Pegaso International promotes:
   a) An effective orientation activity, aimed at
      I. The conscious choice of courses, encouraging the preparation of admission tests and the fulfilment of any additional training obligations;
      II. The creation of a personal training path, also through international and professional curricular experiences;
      III. The creation of opportunities for inclusion in the labour market through job placement;
   b) The organization according to criteria of transparency and recognition of the merits of the didactic activities, of the admission to the courses and the verification of the results;
   c) The right of students to enjoy common spaces;
   d) A high quality of services to support teaching and the right to study;
   e) The removal of architectural barriers that prevent the full enjoyment of services by students with disabilities;
   f) A transparent and shared procedure for highlighting students' views on content and the organization of teaching.

Quality and transparency in scientific and research activity

1. Those belonging to the academic community are responsible for the quality and transparency of their scientific and research activities, respecting the highest ethical standards regarding methodologies, dissemination and use of results. Research should not pursue finalities and objectives contrary to the principles and values promoted by this code of ethics or other national bodies with ethical competences.
2. In the distribution of research funding resources, the institution considers the disciplinary needs of the individual and group contributions made in the scientific field.
3. Pegaso International undertakes to ensure the maximum sharing and dissemination of scientific results and promotes access to knowledge through all appropriate means.

Protection of Intellectual Property

1. The organisation considers excellence in research as key elements for community progress and quality of life. Academic staff shares the goal of managing the research results, intellectual property and technology transfer in the public interest. This objective is pursued in the institutional activity, in collaboration with public and private bodies, and in the exercise of non-institutional activities in scientific-disciplinary areas related to their duties.
2. With reference to patents and other intellectual property rights, the rights of exploitation are in favour of the organisation and / or individual inventors, as provided for by law or through contractual relations between inventors and the organisation. Pegaso International promotes the valorisation and management of intellectual property, in collaboration with inventors and respects fair recognition of their work.

13 - OBLIGATIONS IN RESPECT OF DIDACTIC AND RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Teachers' Responsibility in the Training Process

1. The members of the academic community undertake to carry out teaching activities in full respect of the overall organization and programming of the organisation.
2. The teacher is responsible for the correct and proper observance of his / her educational role, aiming to promote the path of cultural growth for the students, who are guaranteed quality teaching and training activity.
3. Evaluation of student preparation is carried out according to pre-established and pre-announced procedures, performed in a timely manner compatible with the requirements of preparation and organization of studies. Individual didactic-learning interactions with students during specific times and at predefined places are an essential part of the academic duties of the teacher.
4. The teacher should also gather the demands of his student while respecting individual peculiarities, encourage the defence of ethical values and moral integrity together with a sense of responsibility and self-discipline.

Students' Responsibility during their study pathways

1. Students have the right and duty to participate actively in educational and training activities, adopting collaborative, correct and respectful behaviours relating to teachers and those who carry out work or study activities in the organisational structures. They should also share a culture based on honesty conduct, responsibility and respect of the institution.
2. During the examination periods, students must refrain from behaviours that cause disruption, obstruction or disadvantage towards other students or the institution. They should also be careful not to plagiarise work thus preventing a correct evaluation of the examination.

Responsibility in Research

1. Researchers belonging to the academic community are required to observe correct and responsible conduct, including through the adoption of practices or protocols of self-discipline to illustrate the methodology, results and ethical impact to the scientific community.
2. The teaching and research staff is required to update their knowledge, ensuring the link between research and teaching. They should participate in the activities of monitoring and evaluating of individual research activities with a spirit of collaboration, documenting in a correct and true way their own scientific input.
3. Within the research groups, the coordinator or the supervisor's task s are to:
    a. Promote the conditions allowing each participant to act in integrity and professionalism;
    b. Valorise individual merits and defining the responsibilities of each participant;
    c. Encourage dialogue, cooperation, development of ideas and personal skills, especially in the conduct of scientific activities that require a multidisciplinary methodological approach;
    d. Ensure the proper management of intellectual property.

Research results

1. The members of the academic community are required to comply with intellectual property rules. The author of an artwork or a patent owned by the organisation and / or susceptible of application and promotion to the company shall be obliged not to use it for private purposes, to observe the confidentiality of results to the official disclosure and to work in collaboration with the organisation for the management of results in the public interest.

2. In the collective scientific production, the contribution of all the members of the research group must be recognized and emphasized.
3. The organisation does not allow any form of plagiarism and intellectual dishonesty, whether intentional or negligent conduct or abuse on hierarchical position or academic influence. The partial or total self-determination or appropriation of ownership of projects, ideas, research outcomes or inventions belonging to others and the assignment of the ownership of a work to a different writer are also considered as plagiarism. The plagiarism includes omission and falsification in the sources mention and the use of the language with which the scientific products are presented or disclosed.
4. The organisation requires all community members to report any plagiarism cases they know of.

14 - UPDATING OF THE CODE

The present code will be reviewed every 2 years and each new change will be communicated to all the parties.