

The Quality Assurance in the Italian Higher Education System

Trieste, 17 September 2019
Udine, 18 September 2019



The **Quality Assurance System** is the set of activities implemented to ensure that the quality objectives are met. It is also a system through which the Government Bodies carry out their own quality policy.

The Quality Assurance System is **made of**: planning, implementation, observation (monitoring) and control actions, carried out under the supervision of a manager, analyzing both the actions and the tools used.

What happens in
Europe?



Bologna process, 1999

The goal

Building a European Higher Education Area **by 2010**, in order to **increase the employability** and **mobility of European citizens** and **promote European higher education** in the world.



Year 2000: birth of ENQA

European Association of Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Association established in 2000 (with the name of European Network for Quality Assurance, changed to the current one in 2004), with the aim of **promoting European cooperation** to ensure a high level of quality in the university and post-university context, and to achieve the convergence of the systems education and training of the old continent. ENQA originates from the indications of the Bologna declaration (1999) which, highlighting the importance of a common commitment among EU countries on this issue, set out the fundamental objectives for the implementation of a common European area of higher education (European Higher Education Area, EHEA). ENQA is headquartered in Brussels.



Bergen - 2005

Attention is paid to the transnational level at the Bergen meeting.

The Ministers adopt the document "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA" developed, on their behalf, by ENQA (European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies) with the collaboration of EUA, EURASHE and ESIB. This document presents a shared basis of **parameters**, **procedures** and **guidelines on quality assurance processes** and proposes an adequate "peer review" system for agencies or structures that deal with quality assurance and / or accreditation.





Year **2005**

European Quality Assurance Guidelines:

- *Standard* for quality assurance procedures within universities;
- *Standard* for external evaluation of university quality assurance systems;
- Evaluation agencies (autonomy, resources and public definition of the procedures followed).



Year **2015** – Yerevan (Armenia)

The Ministerial Conference meets in Yerevan and on 15 May 2015 approves the new **Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area**.



What happens in **Italy**?



The **Law 286/2006** establishes the **National Agency for Evaluation of University and Research (ANVUR)**.

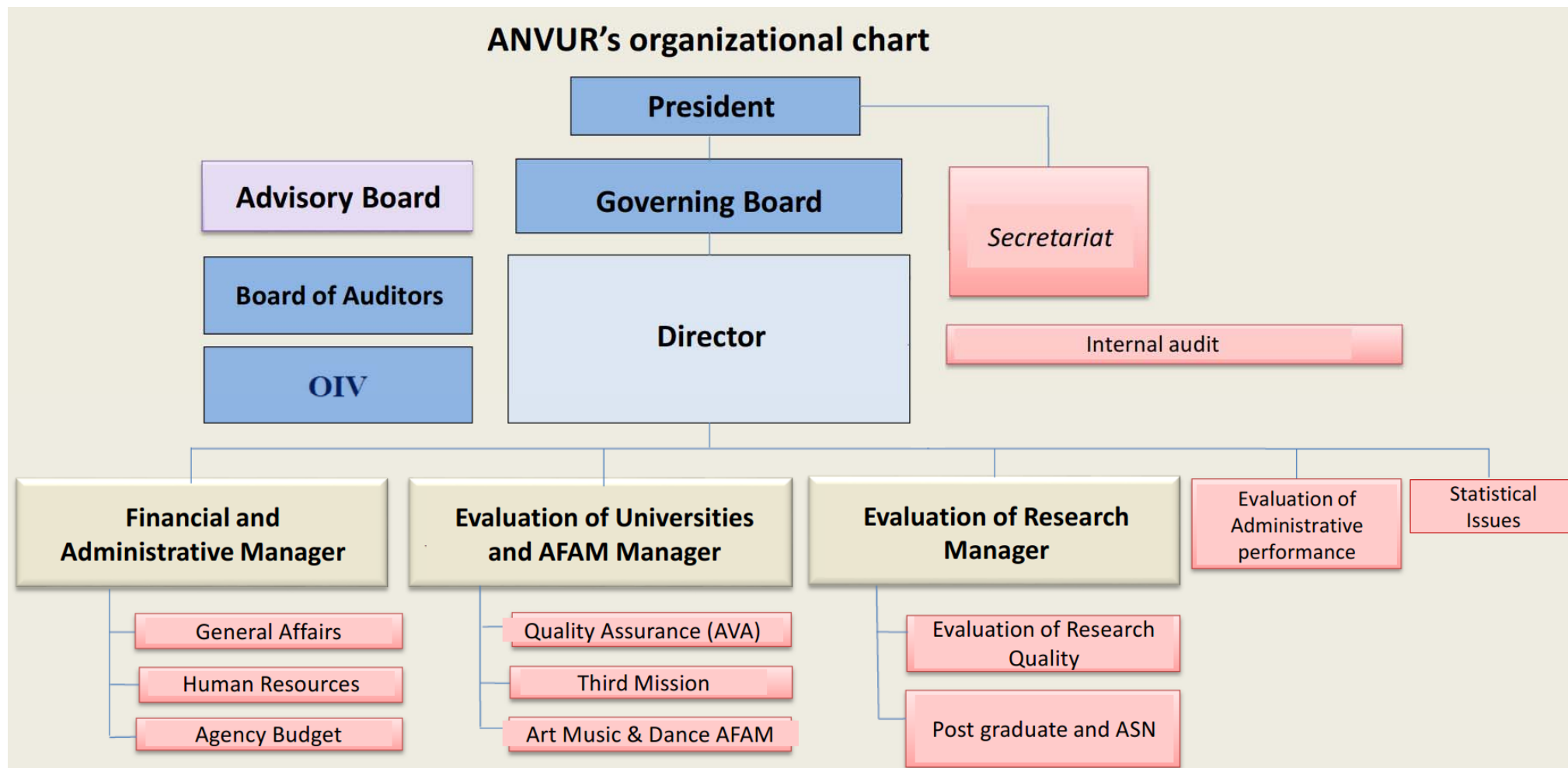
The **Presidential Decree 76/2010** defines the tasks to be carried out by ANVUR. Among other things, the Agency must:

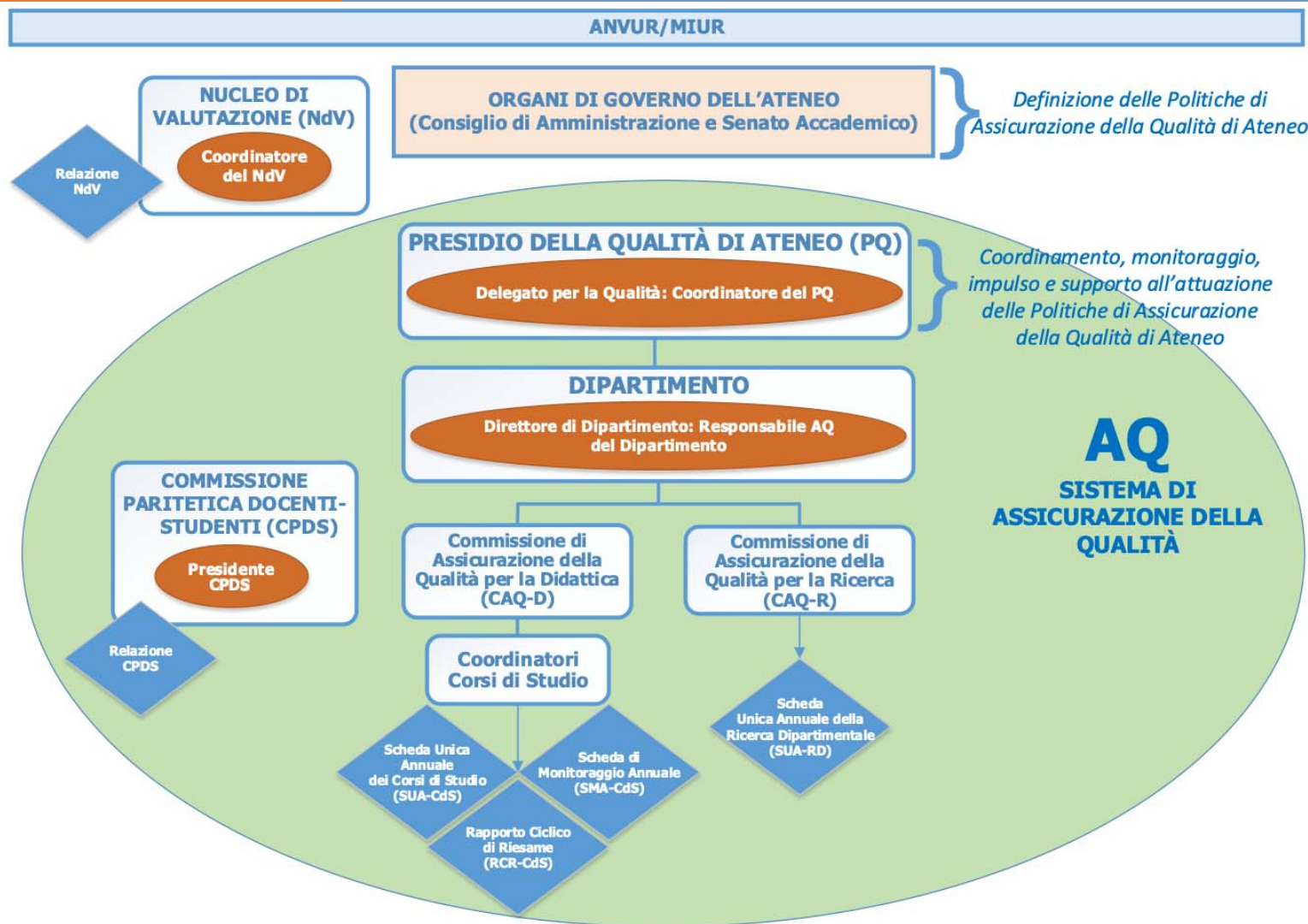
- define criteria and methodologies for the evaluation of Universities and courses of study
- define the minimum requirements with which the Universities must comply in terms of quality of teaching and research
- define uniform procedures for the evaluation of teachers and researchers

The **Law 240/2010**, that deeply reformed the Italian University system, among other things, provided for:

- **introduction** of a periodic assessment system (based on criteria and indicators established ex ante by the ANVUR), of the efficiency and results achieved in teaching and research by any single University and of its internal divisions (Departments and Courses of Study);
- strengthening of the system for **self-assessment of the quality** and effectiveness of activities within the Universities;
- definition of the **Quality Assurance (AQ) system** of the Universities.

Following the **Law 240/2010**, the Ministerial Decree 19/2012 established the so called «**AVA system**» (AVA = Auto-Valutazione e Accreditamento / Self-Evaluation and Accreditation), which was definitively introduced in the **Ministerial Decree 47/2013**.





The University's **Quality Assurance Office (Presidio della Qualità - PQ)** is a collegiate body that is set up, by means of a Rector's Decree, to promote the continuous improvement of the quality of study courses, research and teaching structures and aimed at achieving the Periodic Accreditation of the University and of its Courses of Study.

Functions

The PQ plays a central role in the University Quality Assurance (AQ) through :

- the supervision of the adequate and uniform conduct of AQ procedures throughout the University;
- the proposal of common tools for the AQ and training activities for their application;
- support for the Coordinators of the Courses of Study and for the Department Directors.

As part of training activities, the PQ:

- organizes and verifies the continuous updating of information in the SUA (Single Annual Report) of the Courses of Study;
- regulates and verifies the preparation of the Annual Monitoring Form (SMA) of the Courses of Study;
- regulates and verifies the periodic review activities of the Courses of Study;
- assesses the effectiveness of the improvement actions and their actual consequences;
- ensures the correct information flow to and from the Evaluation Unit and the Joint Teacher-Student Commissions.

A **Quality Assurance Commission (Commissione per l'Assicurazione della Qualità del Corso di Studio / CAQ-CdS)** is established within each Course of Study.

The CAQ-CdS intends to verify the quality of the educational and training activities of the course by presenting the documents and reports required annually for the purposes of the self-assessment and quality assurance processes, and indicating the consequent actions aimed at improving the quality of the Course of Study.

The responsibilities attributed to the CAQ-CdS are:

- preparing the Annual Monitoring Form (SMA) *;
- writing the Cyclic Review Report **;
- analysing the evaluation of the teachers of the Course of Study;
- evaluating and planning the initiatives to be implemented for improvement actions proposed by the Review Report;
- implementing the indications and proposals of the PQ, NuVa and the Joint Teacher-Student Commissions.



Annual Monitoring Form (Scheda di Monitoraggio Annuale - SMA): a predefined model, released by the ANVUR, in which the indicators on students' careers and other quantitative monitoring indicators are presented. The Course of Study must comment these indicators in a summary manner on an annual basis.

****Cyclic Review Report (Rapporto di Riesame Ciclico - RRC):** a report drawn up according to the model prepared by the ANVUR, containing an in-depth self-assessment of the progress of the Course of Study, based on the relevant QA Requirements, with precise indication of the problems and of the solution proposals to be implemented in the next cycle. It is produced at intervals of no more than five years, and in any case in one of the following situations: at the specific request of the ANVUR, Ministry or University, in the presence of strong critical issues or substantial changes to the structure of the course.

The **Joint Teacher-Student Commissions (Commissioni Paritetiche Docenti-Studenti - CPDS)** are internal organs of the university composed of an equal number of professors and students.

Their tasks are:

- to make proposals to the Evaluation Unit for improving the quality and effectiveness of teaching structures through the Annual Report;
- to inform students about the quality policies of the University;
- to monitor the training offer and the quality of the teaching provided.

The Joint Commissions draw up an **Annual Report** which will then be used to draft the Review Report and the Single Annual Report.

For the drafting of the Report, the Commissions must take into account different aspects, including:

- an analysis of the functions and skills required by the job market, upon which they must evaluate the effectiveness of the expected learning outcomes;
- an analysis of the quality of the teachers and the methods of transmission of knowledge and skills, of the teaching aids and structures, of the methods for assessing knowledge and skills;
- an analysis on the management and use of questionnaires relating to student satisfaction;
- an analysis of the Review Report and of the Single Annual Report of the Course of Study to evaluate its completeness.



The law 240/2010 provides for the **mandatory presence of an elective student representation** in :

- Academic Senate;
- Board of Directors;
- Evaluation Unit;
- Joint Teacher-Student Commissions;

The student representation is **not mandatory (but is not excluded)** in:

- Quality Assurance Office;
- Departments;
- Courses of Study;
- Quality Assurance Commissions of the Courses of Study.



The AVA system is based on one hand on the **self-assessment** done by the University, on the other hand on the **verification** done by the ANVUR.

The verification results in an **accreditation** judgment, as a result of a process by which the possession (initial accreditation) or the permanence (periodic accreditation) of the Quality Requirements, needed for carrying out its institutional functions, are awarded to a University (and to its Courses of Study)

The periodic accreditation of the offices has a maximum duration of **five years**.

In order to achieve a positive accreditation judgement, the Universities and their Courses of Study must satisfy **four Quality Requirements** (R1, R2, R3 and R4) **defined by the ANVUR**. The four requirements for periodic accreditation follow the indications formulated by the ESG 2015 – STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

The judgement is done by a **Commission of Experts in Evaluation (CEV)**, that visits the University and a subset of its Courses of Study. The visit lasts one week.

R1: The University has, declares and implements a policy and a vision of the Quality Assurance in teaching and research

R2: The University has an efficient system for Quality Assurance

R3: Every Course of Study has an efficient system for Quality Assurance in teaching

R4: Every Department has an efficient system for Quality Assurance in research and third mission

Every course taught in the undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses **is evaluated** online **by the students** attending the course itself. To carry out this evaluation, the format given by the ANVUR is used.

Students who attend the course have to answer to **12 questions**, giving a score in the range 1 (low) - 4 (high).

Students who do not attend the course have to answer only 7 questions (namely, nr. 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11 e 12).

- 1) Has your preliminary knowledge been sufficient to understand the topics covered in the examination program?
- 2) Is the teaching load proportional to the credits assigned?
- 3) Is the teaching material (indicated and made available by the teacher) adequate for the study of the subject?
- 4) Have the examination procedures been clearly defined?
- 5) Are the hours of lessons, exercises and any other educational activities respected?
- 6) Does the teacher stimulate / motivate the interest towards the discipline?
- 7) Does the teacher present the topics clearly?
- 8) Are the integrative didactic activities (exercises, tutoring, laboratories, etc.), if existing, useful for learning the subject?
- 9) Has the teaching been carried out in a manner consistent with what was stated on the website of the course?
- 10) Is the teacher available for clarifications and explanations?
- 11) Are you interested in the topics covered in the course?
- 12) Overall, are you satisfied with the teaching of the course?

The research in Italian Universities is evaluated by the ANVUR and the Ministry by means of a program named **“VQR” (Valutazione della Qualità della Ricerca – Evaluation of the Quality of the Research)**.

Every professor/researcher has to select his/her two best research products (papers, books, patents...) in the timespan defined by ANVUR (e.g. 2011-14).

Each research product is then evaluated by a Committee and a score is given to the product.

The sum of all the scores defines the quality of research of a Department and/or of a University, which is taken into account by the Ministry in the distribution of public funding.

The intersection between **Quality** and **Internationalization** in the Italian Universities has not been clearly defined yet.

However, among the quality indicators defined by the ANVUR and the Ministry, there are some related to the degree of internationalization of the University and of the courses of study. Namely:

1. Percentage of credits achieved abroad by regular students with respect to the total number of credits achieved by the enrolled students within the normal duration of the course
2. Percentage of graduates within the normal duration of the course that achieved at least 12 credits abroad
3. Percentage of students enrolled in the first year of the bachelor and master degree who have obtained their degree abroad



Besides complying the requirements of the AVA system, the University of Udine obtained in 2015 the **ISO 9001 certification**.

All the administrative processes have been mapped and all the procedures have been codified.

HIC SUNT FUTURA



UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI UDINE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ga6E3LxUug0>