



25th Annual Conference

**Quality Assurance in Higher
Education**

*From national specifics to European
standards*

European perspective on Quality Assurance

Perspective of the Polytechnic of
Setúbal (IPS)

Rodrigo Teixeira Lourenço

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT OF POLYTECHNIC OS SETÚBAL

EXTRENA QUALITY ASSURANCE IN PORTUGAL

ESG IN IPS INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

ROLE OF EUROPEAN ALLIANCE

CHALLENGES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS



INSTITUIONAL CONTEXT

Polytechnic of Setúbal



ACADEMIC COMMUNITY (2024)

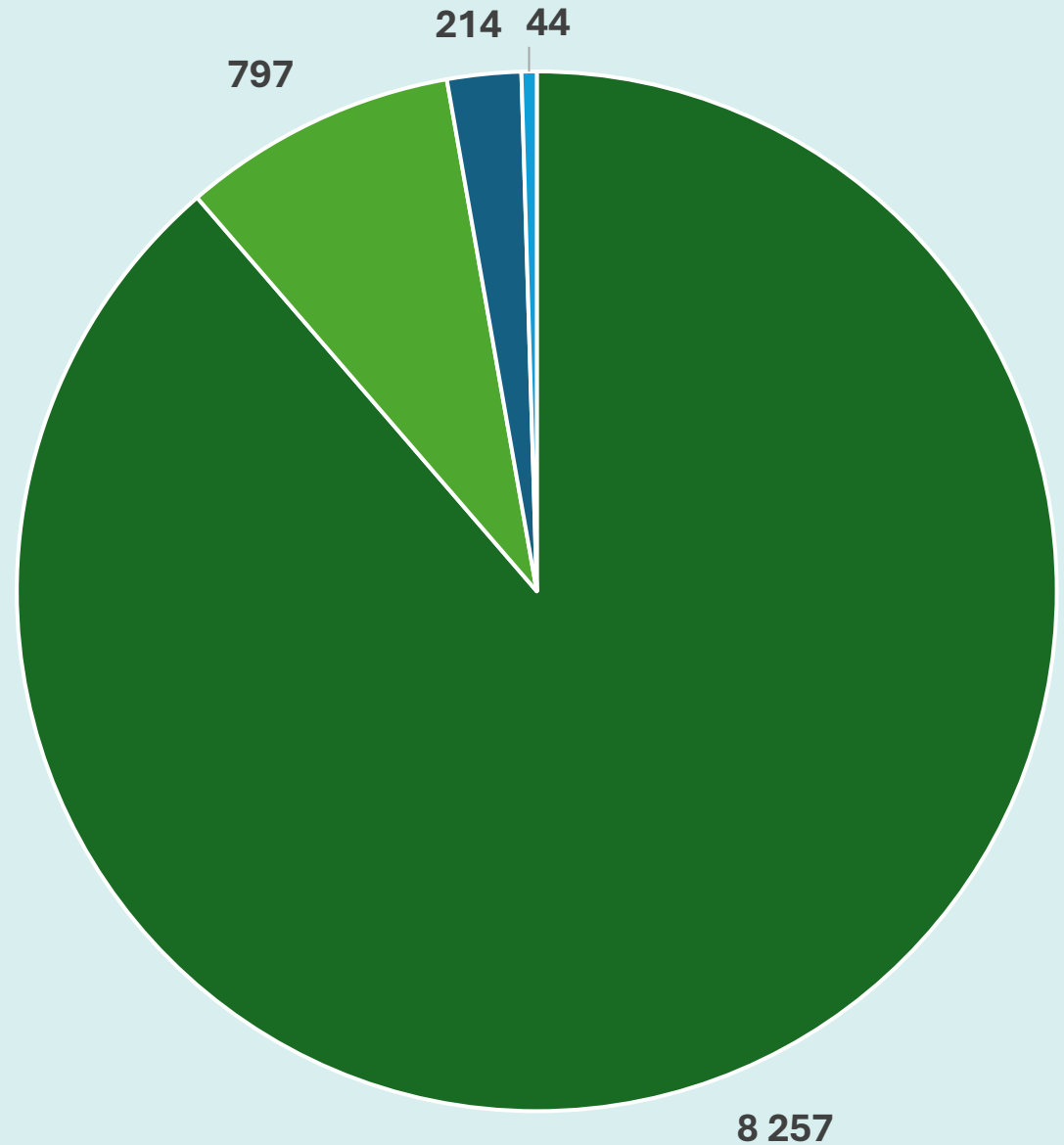
Academic Community **9 312**

8257 Students

787 Teachers

214 Non-teaching staff

44 Research



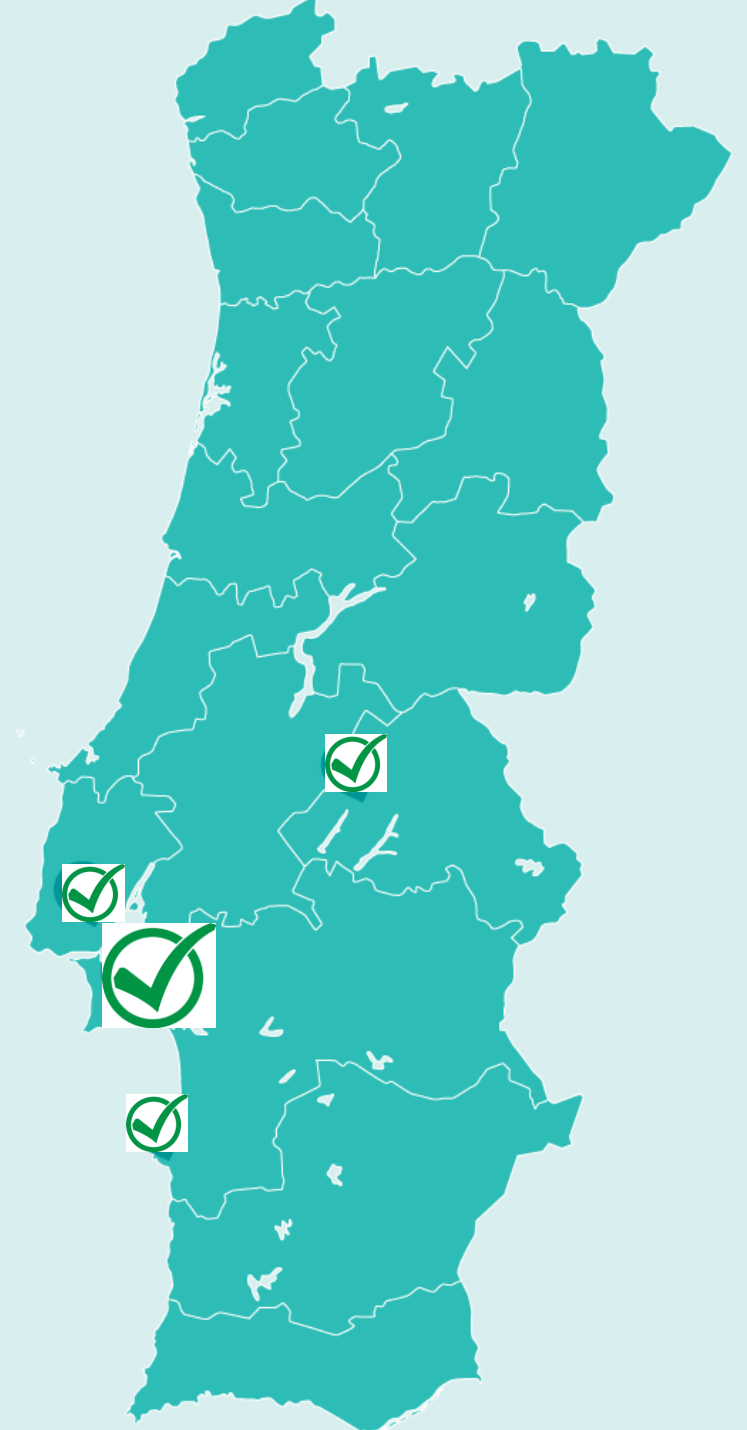
OUR LOCATION

We are **located in Setúbal and Barreiro** and incorporate **five Higher Education Schools**.

We also offer courses in **other six municipalities of Portugal:**

Lisboa District | Amadora • Lisboa • Loures • Vila Franca de Xira

Alentejo | Ponte de Sor • Sines





TWO CAMPUSES FIVE SCHOOLS

Setúbal Campus

- Engineering and Technology
- Social Sciences, Education and Sports
- Business Sciences
- Healthcare

Barreiro Campus

- Engineering and Technology



EDUCATION

Higher Professional Technical
Courses (Level 5)



Degrees (Level 6)



Master's Degrees (Level 7)



Postgraduate programmes



Microcredenciais



0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50

AT THE TOP OF EMPLOYABILITY IN PORTUGAL



WHY?

- Location
- Internship integrated into the curriculum
- Practical and laboratory training
- Strong links with companies in the region
- Courses developed together with the labour market
- Activities for students:
 - Employment Week
 - Career development workshops and seminars
 - Passport to Employment
 - Mentoring | Alumni

RESEARCH CENTERS



MARE

- Marine and Environmental Sciences Centre

CIEQV

- Life Quality Research Centre

ALGORITMI

- Information and Communications Technology and Electronics

SPRINT

- Sport Physical activity and health Research & Innovation Center

CQE

- Center for Structural Chemistry

SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE CAMPUS

- › TOP 10 most sustainable higher education institutions in Portugal*
- › Eco-Schools
- › Eco-Campus
- › Actions in the surrounding community
- › Volunteer Work



* Times Higher Education. The University Impact Rankings 2020.



EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ALLIANCE

E³UDRES²

*Engaged European
Entrepreneurial University
as Driver for European
Smart and Sustainable
Regions*

**Austria • Portugal •
Belgium • Finland •
Germany • Hungary •
Latvia • Romania •
Netherlands**



A great European campus serving as inspiration for the development of a progressive society, creating smart and sustainable regions.

**Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion
for Regions**

**Digital Solutions and (Applied) Deep
Tech for Regions**

**Resilient Economy and Innovation for
Regions**

Creative Industries for Region's Identity



**EXTRENAL
QUALITY
ASSURANCE**

A3ES

Agency for
Assessment and
Accreditation

IPS HAVE A FULL INSTITUTIONAL ACREDITATION FOR 6 YEARS



- Only 33% HEI (32 in 97)
- Only 55% Polytechnics (11 in 20)
- Top rating in Quality Assurance:

“IPS quality policy is very well-defined, and its quality structures are established and at a very good functioning level.

A quality culture has been adopted by the institution, with tested and functional feedback mechanisms.

The IPS offers a robust, varied, and comprehensive educational program that is responsive to the identified needs of employers.

The institute seeks to establish strong collaborative relationships with these employers.”

IPS HAVE A FULL INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION FOR 6 YEARS



WHAT INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION MEANS?

- The agency is more focus on strategy and procedures
- Simplified approval
- The agency allocates fewer resources to institutions in which it has more trust
- Greater autonomy of HEI in approving study cycles
- Increased demands on the quality assurance system

**ESG IN IPS INTERNAL
QUALITY ASSURANCE
SYSTEM**



Policy for quality assurance

QA as a part of the strategic management

Appropriate structures and processes, involving stakeholders

Processes for the design and approval of their programmes

Regulations covering all phases of the student “life cycle”

Assure the competence of their teachers

Monitor and periodically programmes review

Policy for quality assurance

‘We respond to the needs of our stakeholders by integrating and consolidating the activities we carry out, based on up-to-date and reliable information that allows us to permanently improve our performance and the results obtained in the various spheres of action.’



QA as a part of the strategic management



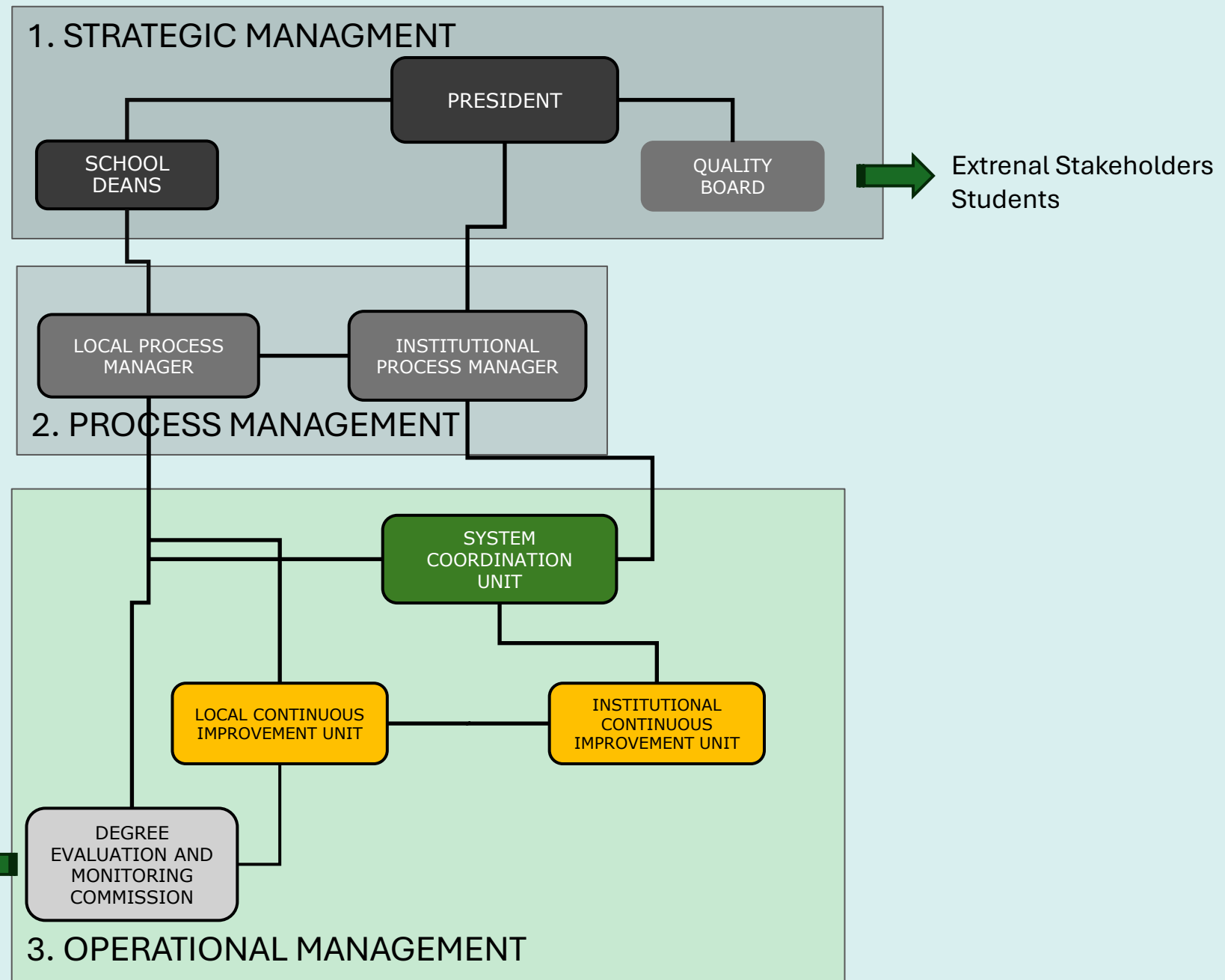
Continuous Improvement



Process Management



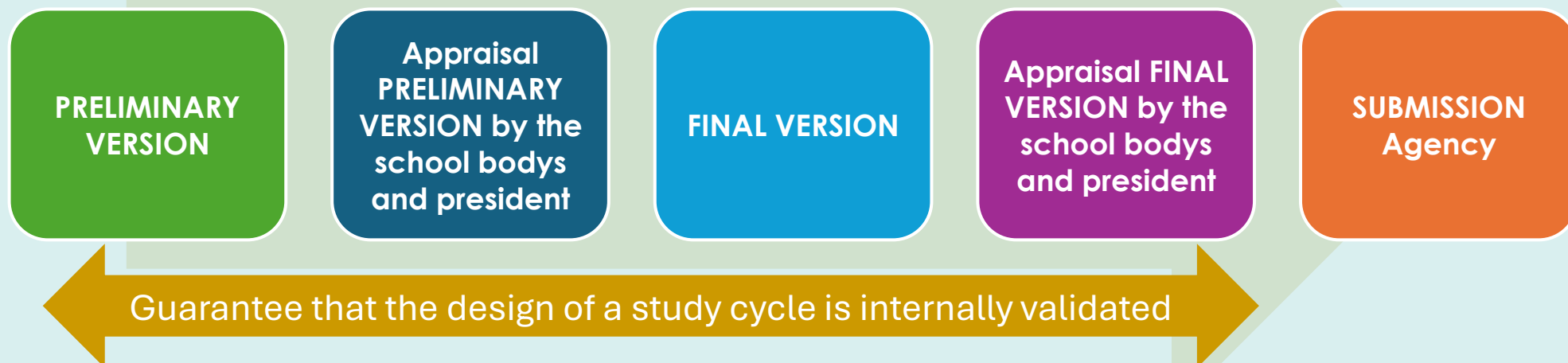
Appropriate structures and processes, involving stakeholders.



Processes for the design and approval of their programmes

Guidelines for (re)structuring study programmes

Principle 1	• CURRICULUM FLEXIBILITY
Principle 2	• TRANSVERSE SKILLS
Principle 3	• PEDAGOGICAL INNOVATION
Principle 4	• INTERNATIONALISATION
Principle 5	• AUTONOMOUS WORK
Principle 6	• DISTANCE EDUCATION
Principle 7	• RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY



Regulations covering all phases of the student “life cycle”

Academic Activities Regulation



Access and Admission

Enrolment and registration

Year transition

Knowledge assessment

Complaints

Calendar

Tuition fees

Scholarship

Certification documents

International Student

Microcredentials

Internships

Mobility

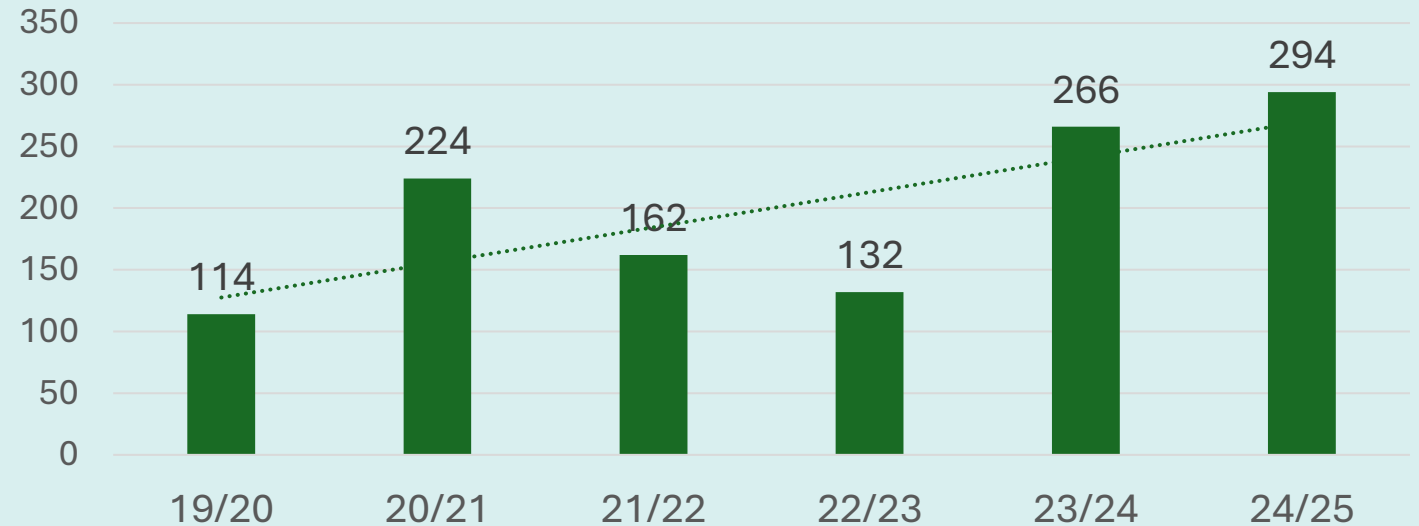
Special Statutes

Assure the competence of their teachers

Since 2022
Pedagogical
innovation as a
variable in teacher
evaluation

Since 2024
Pedagogical
training for early-
career teachers

Teacher training plan since 2017



Innovative teaching strategies

Research (Ethics, Data analysis, Dissemination)

Inclusion (Gender equality, well-being)

Digital Education

Sustainability

Monitor and periodically review their programmes



Student surveys with public dissemination to the academic community of aggregated results

Identification of critical and best practice curricular units

Action plan for curricular units with high failure rates

Annual course monitoring reports with indicators (new students, success, dropouts, etc.).

Procedure for the annual activity of the Committees for the monitoring and evaluation of study cycles

**ROLE OF EUROPEAN
ALIANCE E³UDRES²**

E³UDRES²



Quality and Evaluation Objectives



7 Principles

Quality assurance systems overview

Joint quality assurance principles approved

Regional Impact Assessment

Regional impact reports and cases collected

Quality assurance relies on mutual trust based on shared values.

Quality relies on the contribution of every individual.

Committed to continuous improvement and partners learn from each other and share experiences for future development.

Follows the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) in its activities.

Ensures that the intended learning outcomes can be achieved and recognized within the alliance.

Communicates and shares the information collected about its activities in accordance with its policy of transparency.

Reviews its quality assurance procedures periodically, involving its students, stakeholders and external experts.



Implications for the Polytechnic of Setúbal

Long term	Reinforcing long-term thinking, where the most important thing is to create a real spirit of trust and collaboration between partners.
Strategy	Thinking strategically, increasingly reinforcing the association between the quality area and strategic decisions.
Change	Being willing to change, finding better and more efficient ways of doing things well.
Impact	Thinking more and more about the impact we want and not just how we do it.
Learning	Integrating practices from other partner institutions into institutional practices, with a view to integrated continuous improvement

CHALANGES FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS





People

- Listen to people, be clear about what we want and what people want. Talking about quality means talking about people.



Trust

- Create a culture of quality and trust. I would say that a culture of quality is a culture of trust.



Responsibility

- More demanding internal systems, with higher quality standards.



Flexibility

- Less standardization and more digitalization, which simultaneously guarantees academic freedom and integrity



Strategy

- A long-term, consistent strategic approach is essential, and everyone's participation is evident.



Scope

- Increased capacity of HEIs' internal systems, which must go beyond teaching and learning



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