

EPFL

Quality Policy



25.7.2020

Approved by EPFL's Direction on 7 July 2020

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1. PURPOSE

EPFL is one of the world's leading universities. It aspires to constantly improve its managerial, academic and operational performance¹. In order to better manage the quality of its services and meet the requirements of institutional accreditation, EPFL has designed and implemented a quality management system (QMS)².

2. MISSIONS AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

EPFL's missions and responsibilities are set out in the Federal Act on the Federal Institutes of Technology (ETH Act), which, in Article 2, instructs EPFL to:

- educate students and specialists in scientific and technical fields and provide continuing education and training
- expand scientific knowledge through research
- support junior scientific staff
- provide scientific and technical services
- ensure dialogue with the public
- exploit research findings
- promote the results of its research, including by protecting intellectual property, transferring technology to society, creating startups, collaborating with industry and ensuring Open Access.

In doing all this, EPFL will take account of Switzerland's needs, carry out its activities at an internationally recognized level and encourage international cooperation.

EPFL conducts periodic quality assessments of its teaching, research and services through the QMS, in accordance with Article 27 of Switzerland's Higher Education Act³ (HEdA) and Article 10a of the ETH Act. This quality assurance system is evaluated as part of the institutional accreditation procedure (Art. 28, HEdA), in keeping with the national standards set by the Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance (AAQ)⁴.

EPFL also complies with the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)⁵.

1 There is no universally accepted definition of quality in the academic sector. At EPFL, quality means continuously improving the services it offers to all stakeholders (EUA, 2006, Quality culture in Europe: bottom-up approach, p. 9-10).

2 Abbreviations and specific terms are defined in the Glossary on p. 12.

3 The Federal Act on Funding and Coordination of the Swiss Higher Education Sector, which went into effect in 2015. It replaced the Act on Financial Assistance to Universities (RS 414.20), which did not require institutional accreditation but rather independent audits focusing on the quality of the training and education provided

4 Institutional Accreditation Guide, 1 July 2015. Link: <https://aaq.ch/en/download/institutional-accreditation-guide/>

5 ESG, 2015. Link: http://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf.

3. EPFL'S QUALITY POLICY

EPFL's Direction wishes to demonstrate that its organizational structure and processes comply with the applicable legal and regulatory framework and that they enable EPFL to fulfill its missions with coherence and efficacy⁶ and satisfy its stakeholders' requirements⁷. To this end, it implements a quality policy based on the principle of continuous improvement.

EPFL's QMS gives EPFL's Direction a comprehensive overview of quality assurance of the institution. The QMS⁸ has been tailored to EPFL's needs, institutional culture and organizational structure ("fitness for purpose")⁹. Like any system, the QMS identifies core components (processes¹⁰ in this case) and describes their interactions and feedback loops. The QMS covers all of EPFL's bodies, processes and structures, throughout its extended campus. There are three types of processes at EPFL:

- managerial and strategic processes, which are under the responsibility of EPFL's President and the other members of EPFL's Direction
- teaching, research and innovation processes, which are under the responsibility of the corresponding Schools and Colleges, the Vice-presidency for academic affairs (VPA), the Vice-presidency for innovation (VPI) or associated Vice presidencies (AVP)
- financial and operational processes, which are under the responsibility of the Vice- presidency for finances (VPF), Vice-presidency for responsible transformation (VPT) and the Vice-presidency for operations (VPO).

Each process is mapped out according to EPFL's Strategic Plan 2021-2024, and subsequently implemented and monitored. The processes are described in standardized process sheets (Table 1), and improved continuously through a multi-pronged approach that includes a self-evaluation (or assessment by an EPFL body) and input from students and employees in the preliminary decision-making phase, and recommendations made by independent peers and experts. The main instruments used for continuous improvement are given in Table 2.

6 The requisite elements of quality are considered to be: relevance, or how well the education meets stakeholders' needs; coherence, or how well the resources made available align with the entity's objectives (assessed through a self-evaluation report); and efficacy, or how well objectives are met as assessed by peers. Efficiency at EPFL (or how well results are achieved based on the resources made available) is measured by the ETH Board; this assessment includes discussions with the EPFL president and an intermediate evaluation of the ETH Domain. The most recent intermediate evaluation took place in 2019: <https://www.ethrat.ch/en/issues/current-issues/2019-intermediate-evaluation>.

7 Stakeholders are defined in Lex 1.4.3, Risk Management Regulations at EPFL.

8 EPFL's QMS was initially designed in the 2000s to group together all the EPFL quality assurance instruments according to the hierarchical structure of EPFL's governance (from the ETH Board to employees and eventually students). It has been updated regularly and is accredited by the AAQ and the French engineering degree commission (CTI). It was updated in 2019 to incorporate the requirements of HEdA.

9 EUA, 2006, p. 9.

10 The QMS covers only those EPFL activities that require the oversight of EPFL's Direction. EPFL's Direction oversees processes: (i) where its oversight is mandated by law or an EPFL directive; (ii) that have been identified as inefficient by an EPFL assessment or independent expert; and (iii) that EPFL's Direction would like to improve.

4. QUALITY-RELATED ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In accordance with EPFL's institutional culture, everyone is responsible for quality, but in different ways depending on their role as discussed below.

EPFL's Direction

EPFL's President assumes overall responsibility for EPFL governance and is accountable to the ETH Board for his management performance. EPFL's Direction establishes the EPFL quality strategy, provides the necessary means and instruments to implement it, and assigns specific responsibilities. It makes sure that the opinions of students, employees and other stakeholders are taken into account in the preliminary decision-making phase, and that the recommendations of independent experts are reviewed and incorporated into EPFL's processes as necessary. Each Vice-president is responsible for process effectiveness and efficacy as well as process improvements within their area of activity. They appoint individuals with more specific process-related responsibilities, set documentation requirements and approve continuous improvement objectives.

Directors of Schools and Colleges

The directors of EPFL's Schools and Colleges are responsible for the governance of their entities. They are accountable to EPFL's Direction for their management performance. They regularly submit their activities for peer review, and their peers' opinions are evaluated and taken on board as appropriate. They can delegate certain quality assurance functions to the heads of EPFL teaching Sections and the heads of EPFL Institutes or Centers, as follows:

- The Directors of EPFL teaching Sections are responsible for the coherence and quality of their Bachelor's and Master's curricula and for continuously improving them. They set up a Teaching Committee, an Academic Committee and an Advisory Committee. The Section's Directors take the opinions of students and other stakeholders into account when modifying curricula. The curricula are regularly evaluated by the French *Commission des Titres d'Ingénieur (CTI)* or self-assessed. The Section's Directors also evaluate the recommendations of experts and decide whether to implement them.
- The heads of Schools' and Colleges', Centers and Institutes are responsible for the quality of the research performed within their entities, which includes making sure that projects comply with ethical standards, legal requirements and administrative procedures. They regularly commission experts (from both within and outside EPFL) to conduct assessments; they subsequently evaluate the expert recommendations and decide whether to implement them.

Directors of doctoral programs

The Directors of doctoral programs and the related committees are responsible for the quality of their programs and for continuously improving them. They take the opinions of PhD students and other stakeholders into account when modifying the programs. The quality of the doctoral programs is reviewed by peers during School and College evaluations. The Directors of doctoral programs evaluate the recommendations of experts and decide on their implementation.

EPFL professors

The EPFL professors are responsible for the quality of their teaching and research. They comply with applicable legislation, best national and international practices in education and research, and EPFL's internal directives. EPFL professors adhere to the principle of continuous improvement and take into account the results of student surveys and peers' opinions in order to improve their performance.

Employees

EPFL employees are consulted on all strategic decisions, including this policy, through the EPFL Assembly.

Students

By responding to surveys, students can express their opinions about teaching, working conditions and campus life. Students can communicate their views on EPFL's governance through meetings held between members of EPFL's management, class delegates and student representatives. In addition, students can provide individual feedback on the courses they take. Finally, students can take position, either individually or through a student association, on all strategic decisions through the EPFL Assembly.

Other stakeholders

In keeping with the spirit of continuous improvement, EPFL welcomes the opinions of alumni and of industry and business partners. It gathers their opinions through surveys and requests for feedback on the quality of its research programs.

EPFL units

Many EPFL units have a specific role to play in quality management. These units are run by a unit head or director, whose duties are described on the units' web pages.

Quality Office

An Quality Office was set up within the EPFL General Secretariat in 2017¹. The Quality Office's tasks are to²:

- support EPFL's Direction in strategic decisions relating to quality (in this role, it draws on the advice of a steering committee);
- develop a quality policy on the basis of existing instruments and, if necessary, design additional instruments;
- implement the quality policy;
- support the Section's Directors, doctoral programs, Schools and Colleges in developing self-diagnostics;
- organize and follow up on evaluations of Master's curricula within the Schools and Colleges;
- prepare for institutional accreditation and its follow-up.
- keep informed of legal and regulatory developments related to quality at universities;
- promote a quality-oriented culture within the institution.

Steering Committee

The Quality Office is advised by a Steering Committee whose short-term role is to oversee preparations for institutional accreditation and help design a quality policy. In the long term, this Committee supports the roll-out of the quality policy and the follow-up of the institutional accreditation. A list of the current members of the Steering Committee can be found in Appendix 1.

Process owners

Process owners are appointed by EPFL's Direction. Their duties are to describe, document and provide evidence that the process for which they are responsible is being continuously improved. They periodically set at least one continuous improvement objective based mainly on the instruments described in Table 2. Process owners work with the Quality Office in drafting a quality report.

1 The position of head of quality assurance was held, in turn, by Dr Michel Jaccard (until 2013; 1 FTE), Prof. William Pralong (until July 2019; 1 FTE) and Dr Ewa Mariétoz (from 1 September 2019; 0.7 FTE).

2 Lex 1.2.9 states that "The EPFL Quality Office, in coordination with the schools, is in charge of setting up an efficient quality assurance system to implement a culture of quality for the accomplishment of their missions."

5. IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

Process owners describe their processes in a standardized process sheet. This sheet lets them compare the legal bases, EPFL directives and main strategic (ex-ante) and reporting (ex-post) documents with the corresponding supporting documentation (for example, meeting minutes, performance indicators, survey results and assessment reports). The sheet also describes the method used for the assessment.

Every year, the process sheet is updated and a continuous improvement objective is set in accordance with the Strategic Plan 2021-2024¹. This objective is assessed every year in association with the Quality Office, and the results are recorded in the sheet. The goal of this assessment is to make sure that all processes are reviewed regularly, that the opinions of stakeholders are taken into account and that processes are made more efficient year after year. The Quality Office summarizes all this information in a quality report submitted to EPFL's Direction.

¹ This sheet is also used as a starting point for the self-evaluation based on a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis that is required under EPFL's institutional accreditation procedure.

TABLE 1.
EPFL'S QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

	Activity	Responsibilities and Evaluation method
Managerial processes	<p>1. Managing EPFL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Defining EPFL's overall Strategic Plan 2021-2024, organizational processes and resource allocation, and making fundamental decisions such as whether to open or close units or Bachelor's, Master's or PhD programs. b. Appointing professors. c. Developing and overseeing strategies for quality, equal opportunity and communication. d. Developing and implementing sustainability policy. e. Developing and implementing equal opportunity policies. f. Managing risks. 	<p>These managerial processes are under the responsibility of EPFL's President and of EPFL's Direction. Their efficacy is evaluated during the institutional accreditation procedure, the Dialog meeting.</p>
Teaching, researching, innovation processes	<p>2. Teaching and educating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Designing an education and training policy. b. Designing new curricula and study plans in accordance with societal needs and changes in science and technology. c. Managing existing Bachelor, Master, CMS, M&N curricula. d. Managing Doctoral education. e. Managing student's path in the study cycle (admission, classes, schedules, exams, etc.) and student-oriented information. f. Managing the teaching portfolio. <p>3. Researching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conducting a research project. b. Creating a framework for accessing external research funding. c. Disseminating and valorizing research results. d. Developing research facilities. <p>4. Innovating: Supporting all stakeholders to translate the technologies conceived in EPFL research labs to innovation with a positive impact on society and support the development of innovation leaders for non-academic roles.</p>	<p>At the Bachelor's and Master's level, the efficacy of this process is assessed through an independent assessment of the curricula, regular student feedback, student surveys and comments provided by Advisory Committees and Teaching and Academic Committees. At the doctoral level, the efficacy of this process is assessed through School and College evaluations and PhD student and alumni surveys.</p> <p>These processes (EPFL's "core business") are under the responsibility of the VPA, VPI, the Schools and Colleges, Institutes and Centers, and professors. Their efficacy is assessed through evaluations of Schools, Colleges, research Centers and Institutes, and, at the Bachelor and Master level, by CTI. The international ranking system is also considered to a certain extent.</p>

Financial and operational processes	<p>5. Managing finances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Planning financial needs and their use. b. Managing the controlling system. c. Ensuring and maintaining the preparation of fair, complete and transparent IPSAS financial statements for stakeholders. d. Ensuring appropriate insurance management, monitoring the implementation of audit points and the evolution of the ICS. <p>6. Managing HR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Defining and implementing a HR strategy. b. Managing the job cycle of employees (besides professors). c. Designing the HR function. <p>7. Managing facilities and associated services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Designing and constructing new projects. b. Maintaining and managing existing infrastructure. c. Managing and developing IT systems. d. Purchasing goods and services. e. Managing the proximity services (restaurants, shops, etc). f. Managing health, safety and security. 	<p>These financial and operational and processes are under the responsibility of the VPF, VPT and VPO. These financial and operational processes are evaluated mainly through audits by the ETH Board and the Swiss Federal Audit Office (CDF/SFAO).</p>
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Note: All these processes are covered by EPFL's internal control system (ISC), risk management system and quality management system.

TABLE 2. QMS INSTRUMENTS

A. Instruments for continuous improvement

Accreditations, evaluations and audits

1. Institutional accreditation

EPFL quality management system is assessed as part of its institutional accreditation process (as set forth in Article 28 of the Swiss Higher Education Act) using the national standards set by the Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance (AAQ). This accreditation contains three steps: a self-evaluation, a peer assessment (a panel of international experts also conducts an assessment of five areas: quality assurance, governance, education, research and services, resources, and internal and external communications). EPFL will go through the process for the first time in 2021.

2. Risk assessment

Every year, unit and department heads conduct a risk assessment that evaluates the probability of a risk event occurring and the severity of that event – both before and after factoring in any mitigation measures. The most significant risks are communicated to EPFL's Direction. Should a risk event occur, the EPFL President informs the ETH Board.

3. Swiss Federal Audit Office (SFAO)

The Swiss Federal Audit Office audits EPFL's annual consolidated financial statements and finance-related business processes.

4. Internal audits by the ETH Board

The ETH Board's internal audit team evaluates EPFL's risk management processes, internal control system and governance processes. EPFL's management then reviews the Board's findings and takes any necessary corrective actions.

5. IT Audits

IT security is crucial for EPFL, as stated in Lex 6.5.1. It is also one of the main risks identified during the EPFL's risk management procedure. EPFL has therefore introduced a series of internal controls, and the ETH Board reviews this risk as part of its audits.

6. Occupational health and safety audits

EPFL's Security, Prevention and Health Domain (VPO-SE) oversees occupational health and safety at EPFL Schools and Colleges and conducts audits, as specified in Lex 1.5.1. The ETH Board also performs regular audits to make sure all EPFL employees have a safe and healthy place to work, recommending improvements as needed.

7. Evaluations of EPFL Schools, Colleges, Centers and Institutes

Every eight years, the EPFL Direction commissions an independent expert to review their academic performance. The experts' findings and the following action plan are communicated to the ETH Board as part of the dialogue process. These evaluations are carried out in three steps: developing the terms of reference, completing a self-evaluation and conducting the evaluation itself. The action plan is presented to the ETH Board for approval. A follow-up is performed one year later. The Centers and Institutes may also be evaluated under the same procedure.

8. Evaluation of Master's programmes by the French engineering degree commission (CTI)

EPFL degree programmes are evaluated by Academic and Teaching Committees. EPFL engineer Master's programmes are regularly accredited since 2007 by the CTI. They also carry the EUR-ACE label.

9. Internal control system (ISC)

EPFL has an internal control system that was introduced in line with Federal regulations. The ISC is audited by the internal audit team of the ETH Board, as required by Art. 35abis, para. 1 of the ETH Act and Art. 11 of the Federal Audit Office Act. Every year the SFAO evaluates the existence of an appropriate ICS.

Commissions, committees and conferences (non-exhaustive list)

10. Administrative commissions and committees

Several commissions are in place to oversee administrative procedures (such as for admissions, exams, complaints, etc.). Commissions on research ethics (e.g., the EPFL Animal Research Ethics Committee and the EPFL Human Research Ethics Committee), the committee on risk management (CRM) and the catering commission are quoted as example. This list of commissions is not exhaustive.

11. Academic committee

The academic committee works within each Section to make sure that the courses included in study plans meet the required educational objectives.

12. Teaching committee

The teaching committee works within each Section to help develop study plans and exam procedures. The committee also makes sure that teaching-related rules are implemented properly, conducts assessments and suggests changes and improvements.

13. PhD programme committee

Each PhD program is overseen by a doctoral program committee that recruits PhD students and assists them with administrative and academic procedures. All PhD program Directors meet regularly through EPFL Doctoral School committee meetings.

14. EPFL Section Directors' Conference (CDS)

The CDS develops proposals for the improvement of teaching activities and submits them to EPFL's Direction. It states an opinion on teaching matters, EPFL strategies and consultation procedures, particularly those concerning study plans, knowledge assessment, teaching evaluations, internships and student exchange programs. It proposes any measures it considers useful to help coordinate Sections' educational initiatives.

15. EPFL Teachers' Council (CCE)

The EPFL Teachers' Council (CCE) represents all EPFL teachers, in accordance with Article 17 of the ETH Board. The CCE's role is to advise EPFL Direction on all teaching-related issues.

Dialogue with stakeholders

16. EPFL Assembly (AE)

Under the ETH Act, all EPFL professors, teachers, students and employees should be involved in preliminary decision-making processes and provide their input on the EPFL governance system. This process of collecting comments and suggestions is the main function of the EPFL Assembly.

17. Academic dialogue

Under the academic dialogue procedure, which takes place every year, the heads of EPFL Schools and Colleges inform EPFL's Direction of their strategies and make degree-program-related requests, such as to hire additional professors, open new research facilities or set up new programs. The heads also provide progress updates and make suggestions for improvements.

18. Dialog with the ETH Board

During the Dialog meeting with the ETH Board, EPFL's President and other members of EPFL's Direction submit progress reports and discuss planned strategic developments.

19. Dialogue with Advisory committees

Each Section has an Advisory board comprised of experts representing fields where its graduates are likely to work, whether in industry, academia or the public sector. The committees provide recommendations on the design and improvement of degree programs.

20. Dialogue with student representatives

Student representatives sit on the EPFL Assembly and play an important role in the EPFL governance. They take part in governance-related consultation procedures, for example. For matters related to degree programs, they provide feedback to the Section Directors' Conference (CDS) and meet regularly with different AVP. Class delegates within each section help design and assess course curricula and provide input through surveys.

21. Dialogue with partner companies

EPFL holds bilateral meetings with the main partner companies to determine how satisfied they are with the working relationship. These meetings are chaired by the VPI.

Interviews and feedback

22. Annual performance reviews of EPFL employees

EPFL administrative employees undergo annual performance reviews with their managers. These assessments are carried out in a collaborative manner, and objectives are set jointly for the coming year. The goal is to discuss areas of improvement and identify training opportunities.

23. Students' indicative feedback on classes

In an effort to continually improve their classes and teaching methods, EPFL teachers and Sections ask students for their feedback through a single question sent out the ninth week of the semester. This provides a general idea of how classes are going.

24. In-depth student feedback

For new classes or classes for which there is negative indicative feedback, the corresponding Section asks students for a more in-depth evaluation through a questionnaire covering a variety of topics. This methodology was developed in association with EPFL's Teaching support center (CAPE).

Surveys²

25. PhD student survey

In 2019, the Doctoral School conducted an in-depth survey to assess the quality of its doctoral education and potential areas for improvement, asking PhD students about their expectations, experience and well-being.

² Ad hoc surveys related to the COVID pandemic were also carried out among EPFL students and employees.

26. Job-placement survey

EPFL's Career Center conducts a job placement survey of recent graduates through a questionnaire covering topics such as how long it took them to find a job, how many jobs they applied for and what their starting salaries were. The most recent survey was conducted in 2019.

27. Satisfaction survey for EPFL services

Every two years, a survey of students is conducted to gauge their level of satisfaction with the EPFL services, in an effort to continuously improve them. The survey report is available [here](#).

28. Survey of student life at Swiss universities

The Swiss Federal Statistical Office periodically carries out an online, quantitative survey of students at Swiss higher education institutions in order to obtain data on their living and study conditions. This survey, called the Survey of Social and Economic Conditions of Student Life (SSEE), is carried out through an online questionnaire. It will be conducted again in 2024.

B. Supporting documentation

Contracts, agreements and job specifications

Polycontrat provides a catalogue of all contracts involving EPFL. It is managed by Legal Affairs (AJ). Contracts regarding specific functions are listed elsewhere (SRM for purchasing agreements, SAP RH for employment contracts, GrantsDB for research contracts and 4D for operations-related contracts).

Agendas and minutes of meetings where decisions are made or information is communicated

EPFL's Direction holds weekly meetings attended by the EPFL President and VP the head of AJ, the head of communications (Mediacom) and the General Secretary. These meetings take place according to the procedure set forth in the Appendix to Lex 1.1.1. Every month, EPFL's Direction meets with School Deans and College Directors (in "D2" meetings) to discuss day-to-day issues as well as management and academic processes. The VPF and the VPO meet with unit and department heads every month (in "SOP" meetings) and with Deans and Directors to exchange information and discuss campus-related problems. At these meetings, they review projects and initiatives under way with priority given to IT projects.

Statistics, indicators, dashboards and registers

When making decisions, EPFL's Direction draws on statistics, bibliometrics, international rankings, indicators related to the institution's degree programs, research-related indicators, financial indicators and other performance metrics. The data come from a range of sources including:

- Catalyse, which is the application for the institution's purchasing and request-for-proposals processes. This platform is managed by the Procurement and Purchasing Department (DA) and improved as needed.
- IS-Academia, which is the application for the institution's courses and degree programs. It incorporates requirements related to the Bologna process and ECTS credits. On IS-Academia, students can find class descriptions, information about their tuition payments, enrollment certifications, class schedules, exam dates, class lists and other information. The data in IS-Academia can also be used to generate statistics.

Other data used by EPFL's Direction include:

- new professor hires
- international rankings
- the Research Indicators & Statistics report
- metrics of the EPFL performance on gender equality, in line with the ETH Domain's efforts to promote this issue
- sustainability reports submitted to the Swiss government and ETH Board (EPFL also publishes sustainability indicators and an annual carbon-footprint assessment; these all reflect EPFL's commitment to preserving natural resources, protecting the environment and continually improving its services in this regard)
- Confidential reports that the Person of Trust and ombudsman provide to EPFL's Direction.

Strategies, road maps and white papers

EPFL's VP and units develop specific strategies (e.g., Core, Learn, Make strategy, Mediacom's communications strategy, and the DA Purchasing Road Map) and submit them to EPFL's Direction for approval.

C. Communication channels (non-exhaustive list)

EPFL issues an annual report, as do its main VP and units (e.g., EPFL Sustainability and the Equal Opportunities). These reports are available on the corresponding web pages.

EPFL's Direction informs the EPFL community about its decisions through an electronic newsletter. In the event of a major decision or institution-wide issue that needs to be discussed, Mediacom holds a "Town Hall" meeting to which the entire community is invited.

All EPFL rules, ordinances, regulations and directives are stored in an online directory called Polylex. It was designed and is regularly updated by AJ.

EPFL has drafted a Compliance Guide that sets out the main rules, practices and values governing EPFL.

EPFL's marketing materials (such as brochures and websites) provide information about its degree programs and are targeted to specific audiences.

EPFL holds various events to promote science and engineering to young people and the general public in order to encourage the next generation of students. Information about these events is provided on the EPFL website.

EPFL researchers' publications are stored in the [Infoscience](#) online directory. This directory contains all types of scientific documents including articles, summaries, conference publications, books, patent filings, posters, presentations and teaching materials.

Dimensions is EPFL's new magazine that showcases the cutting-edge research being done through a series of in-depth articles, interviews, portraits and news highlights. Dimensions is published four times a year.

EPFL's website was designed to be operated in a decentralized manner. Mediacom develops the general rules for the website (like the [webmaster guidelines](#)) and manages the School's brand identity.

APPENDIX 1. STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS (AS OF 25 JULY 2021)

- Jean-Philippe Ansermet, SB professor
- Pierre-André Besse, Research Associate, AVP-E (since 1.1.2021)
- Daniel Chuard, Director of Educational Affairs, VPE (until 31.12.2020)
- Rafael Corvalán, Director of Information systems (since 1.11. 2020)
- Véronique Demeuse, Deputy HR Director
- Matthias Gäumann, Director of Research Affairs, VPR (until 30.9.2020)
- Robert Giezendanner-Thoben, Deputy, VPI (since 1.5.2020)
- Corinne Feuz, Deputy Director of Communication and Spokesperson
- Hakim Hadjeres, Head of Internal Controls and Risk Management, VPF
- Cécile Hébert, professor SB, President of the Council of EPFL Teachers (CCE)
- Agnès Le Tiec, Deputy, VPT (since 1.3.2021)
- Antoinette Musard, Deputy, VPO, (since 1.1.2021)
- Marie Savoy, Deputy, VPRHO (until 31.12.2020)
- Paul Sunderland, Chief of staff, Deputy, VPA (since 1.1.2021)
- Chiara Tanteri, Head of Service, SI, VPSI (until 31.10.2020)
- Caroline Vandevyver, President of the EPFL Assembly (since 30.9.2020), Head of ReO
- Fabio Zuliani, President of the EPFL Assembly (since 22.09.2020)

Moderators: General Secretary Tristan Maillard and Quality Deputy Ewa Mariéthoz

GLOSSARY AND MAIN ABBREVIATIONS³

AAQ	Swiss Agency of Accreditation and Quality Assurance. Formerly the OAQ (Office of Accreditation and Quality Assurance).
AE	The EPFL Assembly, which is a separate entity within the EPFL structure, alongside EPFL's Direction, the Central Services and the teaching and research units.
AJ	Legal affairs (Affaires Juridiques) (previously the General Counsel).
AVP	Associated Vice-presidents or associated Vice-presidency.
Audits	Professional audits are carried out by competent, independent experts. These audits, often unannounced, are conducted in accordance with criteria chosen by the auditor. There are no academic audits in Switzerland.
CCE	The Council of EPFL Teachers, which represents all EPFL teachers.
SFAO	The Swiss Federal Audit Office, which conducts strategic oversight of EPFL's finances.
CDS	Section Directors' Conference.
Class delegates	Class delegates have three main functions: representing their class to professors and at different types of meetings, communicating important information to their class, and coordinating class activities and events. Delegates can also attend higher-level meetings such as those held by teaching committees, program councils and school councils. They are elected by their class as specified in Lex 2.11.5.
Compliance Guide	EPFL's Compliance Guide sets out the main rules, practices and values governing EPFL.
CTI	The French Commission des Titres d'Ingénieur.
ETH Act	Federal Act on the Federal Institutes of Technology (RS 414.110).
ETH Board	The ETH Board is responsible for the strategic management and oversight of the ETH Domain in compliance with the Federal Council's strategic objectives.
EPFL	Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne.
ESG (eng), ESG (fr)	European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area.
EUA	European University Association.
EUR-ACE	The EUR-ACE (European Accredited Engineer) label is managed by the European Network for Accreditation of Engineering Education (ENAE).
Evaluation	EPFL's Schools, Colleges and Bachelor's and Master's programs are regularly evaluated by independent experts. The evaluations are carried out in three steps. EPFL's degree programs are evaluated by the CTI.
-	A methodological approach published by the EUA (see above) in 2006 and used by universities to ensure that they meet their objectives and fulfill their missions.
FTE	Full-time equivalent positions.

³ Adapted from the Analytic Quality Glossary: <http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/index.htm#p>.

HEdA	The Swiss Higher Education Act, or the Federal Act on Funding and Coordination of the Swiss Higher Education Sector (RS 414.20).
Institutional accreditation	In Switzerland, the HEdA requires that an educational institution receive institutional accreditation in order to call itself a “university” (Articles 28–30 of the HEdA).
Polylex	The electronic directory of all EPFL rules, ordinances, regulations and directives.
Process	A continuous sequence of operations or actions that constitute the way of doing or making something.
QMS	EPFL’s Quality Management System, which is a coordinated set of procedures designed to assess and improve the quality of the services.
Quality	For EPFL, quality refers to the ability to constantly improve performance.
Stakeholders	People or bodies with a direct or indirect interest in EPFL’s performance. Examples include the Swiss Parliament, the ETH Board, business partners, research partners, students and their families, employees, local government agencies, future employers and the academic community.
Standard	In this particular case, these are mainly the AAQ, ESG and EUR-ACE standards.
VP	Under Article 3 of the Ordinance on the Organisation of the EPFL (Lex 1.1.1), there are 5 Vice-presidencies at EPFL: Vice-presidency for academic affairs (VPA), Vice-presidency for innovation (VPI) , Vice-presidency for operations (VPO) , Vice-presidency for finances (VPF) , Vice-presidency for responsible transformation (VPT) . VP stands also for Vice-president.

