

PSRS Quality Assurance Board Meeting (31/8/2021)

Participants of the meeting

1. Fabrizio Giorgis (POLITO)
2. Pasi Vahimaa (University of Eastern Finland)
3. Alain Tremeau (UJM)
4. Paolo Sirianni (Microla)
5. Gustavo Insaurralde (UJM)
6. Francisco Matos (PSRS representative student 2021-2023)
7. Ahmed Salama (PSRS representative student 2022-2024)
8. Duc Le (past PSRS representative student 2020-2022)

Agenda

1. Results on questionnaire defined by QAB from PSRS students (2nd semester, by Pasi Vahimaa)
2. Follow-up last teacher meeting (June 13th, 2023)
3. Selection process concerning Cohort 2023-2025
4. Any other business

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| 1. Results on questionnaire defined by QAB from PSRS students (2nd semester, by Pasi Vahimaa) |
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The QAB representative, Pasi Vahimaa, has presented the results of the questionnaires sent to the PSRS students during their stay in UEF. These results complete the ones made by Alain Tremeau (UJM), Fabrizio Giorgis (Polito) and Regis Fournier (UPEC) during the last QAB meeting.

The results concern the students of the second semester of the programme. The results are overall quite positive and the feedbacks from students have been taken into account. One of the examples mentioned were the courses “Optical Design” and “Micro and Nanophotonics” whose reviews were more positive than the previous years due to the recruitment of new faculty professors.

Apart from these general elements, UEF QAB representative highlighted two distinctive results to the other members of the board. First of all, in some courses, specially “Optical Design”, the marks range assigned by students is really high: some students have an extremely positive view on the course whereas others are giving the lowest marks. During his explanation, Prof. Vashima showed his concern and proposed to the other QAB members to find together the reason of this variation. QAB representative from Polito, Fabrizio Giorgis, proposed to discuss face-to-face to the students while maintaining the privacy of the questionnaire’s responses, also involving a representative student. Prof. Vashime agrees to interview some students chosen randomly.

The second problem discussed by Prof. Vashima was the logical inconsistency produced by the contiguous courses of “Light Matter Interaction” and “Non-linear optics”, the first one delivered by UJM in the third semester, the second by UEF in the second semester. These courses should be swapped in the PSRS curricula since the first should be propaedeutic to the other one.

2. Follow-up last teacher meeting (June 13th, 2023)

Two subjects have been discussed: first of all, the presentation of the results about the M1/M2 students at UJM, M2 students at PoliTo, M2 students at UPEC; secondly, the Cooperative Online Interactive Learning System (COILS) presented by Prof. Amine Nait-ali (UPEC).

The COIL means “Cooperative Online Interactive Learning Systems” (COILS) It compounds three attributes:

- **Cooperative learning:** teaching method where students collaborate in groups to achieve common goals and enhance their learning experience.
- **Interactive:** learners are actively engaged with the material, the instructor, and each other, rather than passively absorbing information.
- **Learning Systems:** This likely refers to the tools, platforms, and structures that support and facilitate this type of learning.

Two type of projects could be proposed:

- 1st option: multi-projects scheme. Projects are set up separately between two universities that mutually agree on the topics, based on the skills developed by students at each institution. These projects are complementary to each other. Topics can be proposed either by the staff or by the industrial partner. This project is coordinated by two supervisors per project and it gives to the student 2 credits.
- 2nd option: one project. A single project is established between the partners, who reach a consensus on the topics based on the skills that students have developed at each institution. The project complements the educational objectives of both institutions. Topics for the project can be proposed either by the academic staff or by the industrial partner. The project is coordinated by three supervisors and it gives to the students 2 credits.

COILS could be setup as a first step between UPEC and UJM only because both the Universities have already projects included in their curriculum. UPEC & UJM will try to trigger such new projects for 2023-2024

UJM QAB member, Gustavo Insaurralde, argued that the International Cooperation Department of UJM funds COIL proposals under the framework of the Green Mobility Programme. There are also other programmes called Blended Intensive Programmes funded by Erasmus which could complement COIL and COILS.

3. Selection process concerning Cohort 2023-2025

The 2023 selection process took place as follows:

- All applications were checked for completeness / conformity , anyway, incomplete applications during the first phases of selection were tolerated.
- 155 applications accepted for first evaluation according to evaluation criteria
- First evaluation: all 155 applications were evaluated. Applications with a first evaluation of 3.0 or higher were retained for second evaluation.
- Second evaluation: 78 applications underwent a second evaluation. Following analysis of second evaluator, applications with average score of 3.5 or higher were retained for the third round.

- Third evaluation : 43 applications were evaluated during the third round. The remaining 2 evaluators analyzed and scored the applications with 3.5 or higher after second phase. All candidates with 3.5 after third phase were retained for interviews.
- Interviews. All interviews were conducted by the programme coordinator Prof. Destouches to avoid evaluator biases. 41 candidates were interviewed.
- Final selection was conducted during the AMB selection meeting, March 9th and 10th at UPEC, by 4 evaluators.

155 applications accepted for first evaluation
41 candidates were interviewed

Number of applicants per country :

Europe: 5 applicants (3.2%) – Turkey (2), Armenia, Austria, Italy (1 each).

Asia: 104 applicants (67.1%) – Pakistan (45 appl.), Bangladesh (29), India (15), Iran (3), Lebanon (3), Philippines (2), Russia (2), China, Nepal, Syria, Tajikistan, Yemen (1 each)

Africa: 44 applicants (28.4%) – Nigeria (14), Ethiopia (7), Egypt (6), Ghana (4), Cameroon, Morocco and Sri Lanka (2 each), Algeria, Burundi, Kenya, Liberia, Libya, Mauritania and Zimbabwe (1 each)

America: 2 applicants (1.3%) – Mexico, Bolivia (1 each).

4. Any other business

Problems with Students fees in POLITO

QAB student representative, Francisco Matos, expressed his concerns about the delivery of Italian national diploma. Students that have not graduated from an European country need to provide a Statement of Comparability to show that their bachelor degree is equivalent to an European bachelor, for enrollment into PoliTo. This procedure is done online and has a cost of 150 euros. Additionally to this, students have to pay an extra 100 euros fee to graduate from polito. These two items correspond to administrative fees and could be covered by the PSRS program.

This subject was proposed to be submitted to the joint AMB-QAB meeting.

Student Feedback on one UPEC professor

QAB student representative, Francisco Matos, collects all his cohort feedback, after each semester from his classmates regarding each course in one to one meetings. A professor in UPEC retaliated by telling the students by email that she was dissatisfied on the feedback and that she would not give a recommendation letter to any of them. Francisco Matos expressed his disappointment stating that this kind of behaviour is exactly what stops student from giving an honest opinion and hindering the progress of academic programs.

Student feedback concerning the final thesis discussion

QAB student representative, Francisco Matos, suggested that the jury assigned for the master thesis should be related to the topic of the student; actually some students felt that their projects were not properly appreciated due to the committee background not really matching.