

PSRS Quality Assurance Board Meeting (5/9/2024)

Joint PSRS & iPSRS QAB Boards

Participants of the meeting

1. Fabrizio Giorgis (POLITO, chair PSRS QAB)
2. Pietro Mandracci (POLITO)
3. Dovydas Benevicius (VU, chair iPSRS QAB)
4. Pasi Vahimaa (UEF)
5. Alain Tremeau (UJM)
6. Régis Fournier (UPEC)
7. Marwan Abdou Ahmed (University of Stuttgart)
8. Maria Freire Hermelo (Eindhoven University of Technology)

Agenda

1. Presentation and discussion about student evaluation of the courses (semester 2, Pasi Vahimaa)
2. Selection process concerning iPSRS Cohort 2024-2026
3. Guidelines for the starting work of the iPSRS QAB
4. Any other business

1. Presentation and discussion about student evaluation of the courses - semester 2

The QAB member 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 Régis Fournier (UPEC) during the last QAB meeting for the PSRS program. The results concern the students of the second semester of the programme. The results are overall really positive, almost all the course obtained an average ranking higher than 4 (over 5). There is an exception for the course of "Optical Design" but in such a case, as remarked by several other QAB members, only 1 student attended the course, thus the result (3.25/5) makes no sense from a statistical point of view.

F. Giorgis asked if the present format of the students questionnaire will be the same also for iPSRS framework. Several QAB members agree that a questionnaire can be used also for the iPSRS students. Alain Tremeau suggested to modify the present format in a more compact version. After a brief discussion the QAB board decided that a new version of the student questionnaire for iPSRS will be prepared by a round robin process similar to what actuated in the past with the PSRS program. Alain Tremeau will start to propose a new version of the questionnaire waiting for the feedback of all the other colleagues, the procedure will be coordinated by Dovydas Benevicius, the chair of the iPSRS QAB.

2. Selection process concerning iPSRS Cohort 2024-2026

Fabrizio Giorgis summarized the results of the selection process concerning the new iPSRS Cohort.

This year we had 165 applications accepted for first evaluation. At the end of the selection process we have 10 incoming students (total), 9 confirmed (4 women) + one student from Syria awaiting her visa.

Final selection grades of the selected students is quite good: Mean score of 3.97/5, range from 4,64/5 to 3.67/5, with 4 candidates above 4.0/5

For what concerns the student origins: 3 Egyptians, 2 Nigerians, 1 Mexican, 1 Pakistani, 1 Turk, 1 from the United States, and possibly one Syrian (if she obtains a visa).

F. Giorgis reminded the details about the Scholarships: 1 EMJM scholarship for the highest ranked candidate (Mexican), and 8 iPSRS scholarships for the others. If the Syrian student obtains her visa, 2 for EMJM scholarships for the 2 highest ranked candidates (Mexican man and Egyptian woman), and 8 iPSRS scholarships for the others, including the Syrian woman.

In semester 3 the student concentration tracks are: 6 at UJM, 2 (possibly 3) at UPEC, and 1 at VU.

Two students presented an appeal versus the rejected application, the Appeal Committee rejected both. In detail, for Mr. Mainak Patra (India), the average grade obtained was 3.35 (below the threshold of 3.5/5); his background was not directly considered in line with PSRS framework (no previous experience in photonics). For what concerns mr. Muhammad Abdelnaby (Egypt), the average grade obtained was 3.85 (above the threshold of 3.5/5), he was selected for the interview but received a grade of 2.9/5 (answers were not considered appropriate in the framework of the EMJMD i-PSRS programme).

3. Guidelines for the starting work of the iPSRS QAB

Dovidas Benevicius summarized the role of the QAB board in the framework of the new iPSRS program. The objectives of the QAB board are aimed to verify the iPSRS programme aligns with EACEA expectations in terms of excellence, performance, and relevance, implementing and analyzing the results of the quality review process. The QAB mission is focussed on the improvement of teaching activities, formal and informal learning outcomes, course coherency, enhancement of academic coordination, board-level coordination, academic partner coordination, and relationships with industrial partners. QAB would assure the programme adequacy with academic and industrial expectations, identifying processes aimed to facilitate an active participation in the quality assurance process.

4. Any other business

Alain Tremeau underlined the need to establish clear rules for the AI used by students (at several levels).

Dovidas Benevicius replied that Nathalie Destouches mentioned such issue in the slides devoted to the discussion in the AMB meeting, proposing solutions.

Fabrizio Giorgis took note and declared that he would raise the issue at the next joint AMB-QAB meeting.