

The background of the entire page is a grayscale image of several interlocking gears. The gears are of different sizes and are arranged in a way that they appear to be meshing together. The lighting creates shadows, giving the gears a three-dimensional appearance. The gears are set against a dark, textured background that looks like wood grain.

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

**QUALITY
ASSURANCE GROUP**

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Why Quality Assurance?

The Institute's Path to Accreditation and Excellence

In Switzerland, all Higher Education Institutions must undergo institutional accreditation to retain or obtain the right to call themselves a "university", "university of applied sciences" or "university of teacher education". This accreditation is also required for institutions to receive federal funding.

Since the introduction of the Federal Act on Funding and Coordination of the Swiss Higher Education Sector (Higher Education Act, HEdA) in 2015, Higher Education Institutions must regularly evaluate their quality assurance systems within the framework of institutional accreditation. This process verifies that universities have implemented quality mechanisms integrated into their governance to guarantee the quality of their teaching, research, and services.

Higher Education Institutions must comply with 18 quality standards described in Annex 1 of the Accreditation Ordinance HEdA, which are divided into the following five areas:

- Quality assurance strategy
- Governance
- Teaching, research, and services
- Resources
- Internal and external communication

These standards are based on European standards, particularly the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), derived from the Bologna Process. The Geneva Graduate Institute's quality assurance system is consistent with the overriding objective of excellence set by its Foundation Board. Based on a strong culture of quality that is valued by all components of institutional life, it inspires the continuous search for the best ways to improve its operations.

Two Core Components of the Quality Assurance System

Structures and Policies Promoting Quality

- The Institute's quality assurance system is based on a regulatory framework complemented by policies and practices that promote a quality culture.
- This framework for professors fosters quality research, notably by using teaching exemptions and sabbaticals as compensation for academic management activities.
- As pertains to students, the provision of considerable financial support is a major contribution to academic quality.
- These policies and practices are complemented by a division of responsibilities that allows for consultation, participation in decision making, and decision making in the interest of strong quality control.

The Principle of Evaluation

- The Institute's quality assurance strategy is based on a set of regular evaluations of teaching, research and services by external experts.
- It is based on the prior setting of objectives that make it possible to measure the progress made and to ensure the follow-up of the recommendations or objectives set.
- It is based on a set of measurement tools and relevant information as well as on a growing use of benchmarking.



“ Quality assurance ensures universities continuously strive to offer the best possible teaching, research, and overall academic environment. It's about creating a culture of growth with continual re-evaluation and monitoring of processes, not merely ticking boxes. ”

OCÉANNE FRY, Student Services Officer

Who Are We?

Institute Members from All Areas of the Institute

The **Quality Committee** is responsible for developing and monitoring an annual action plan and a four-year projection of the quality approach. The Committee members meet on a quarterly basis.

The **Quality Working Group** (launched in September 2023) is responsible for implementing the action plan developed by the Quality Committee and validated by the management. The Working group members meet on a monthly basis.



Quality Committee Members

BRUNO CHATAGNAT
Director of Administration

LAURENCE ALGARRA-AL MADHOUN
Director of Cabinet

DOMINIC EGCEL
Executive Director, Research Office

LAURENT NEURY
Senior Academic Adviser

SOPHIE FLEURY DI GUARDO
Head of Corporate Communications

VANESSA VALERIO
Head of Projects

LAURENCE LYS
Executive Education

ELIANE BALLOUHEY
Director of Executive Education

SAM PENNIFOLD (UNTIL MAY 2024)
GISA President

ANGELLO LEON (FROM MAY 2024)
GISA President

ADA REPRESENTATIVE

Quality Working Group Members

BRUNO CHATAGNAT
Director of Administration

VANESSA VALERIO
Head of Projects

EMMA CRANFIELD PERIN
Administration Coordinator, Direction of Studies

GWENDOLINE MUNCH
Housing Administration

OCÉANNE FRY
Student Services Officer

PIERRE-ANDRÉ FINK
Deputy Head of Library

SOPHIE FLEURY DI GUARDO (FROM MARCH 2024)
Head of Corporate and Internal Communications

DOMINIC EGCEL (UNTIL JUNE 2024)
Executive Director, Research Office

LENKA KEPKOVA (FROM JUNE 2024)
Research Office

CÉLINE FORFERT (UNTIL APRIL 2024)
Co-Head of Human Resources

MARTA ROSA (FROM MAY 2024)
Director of Human Resources

SAM PENNIFOLD (UNTIL MAY 2024)
GISA President

ANGELLO LEON (FROM MAY 2024)
GISA President

ALEXANDRE EL MEOUCHI (UNTIL MAY 2024)
GISA Vice-President for Master’s Programmes

RAMI MOTTU (FROM MAY 2024)
GISA Vice-President for Master’s Programmes

ZOYA ANASTASSOVA (FROM MARCH 2024 UNTIL OCTOBER 2024)
Head of Academic Departments Office

STÉPHANIE SCHWEITZER (FROM NOVEMBER 2024)
Academic Departments Office

LAURENCE LYS (FROM MAY 2024)
Executive Education

ADA BOARD MEMBERS

“ As we interact with students daily, it is essential that we commit to excellence in our work to ensure the best possible experience for them. ”

EMMA CRANFIELD, Administrative Coordinator, Direction of Studies

What Did We Achieve in 2024?

In close collaboration with various services across the Geneva Graduate Institute, our team has made progress in analysing survey data, strengthening internal reporting, refining auditing strategies, and enhancing quality communication practices.

Key Achievements

- **Strategic Quality Communication Roadmap:** We established clear priorities to improve institutional quality communication.
- **Housing Administration Survey:** Launched for the first time, the survey gathered over 100 responses to inform future improvements.
- **Joint Learning about Quality Evaluation Practices:** The monthly meetings of the Quality Working Group featured Institute services, such as the Research Office and Executive Education, to foster a deeper understanding of quality processes.
- **Showcasing the Quality of the Institute’s Services:** Since September 2024, regular features in the monthly newsletter have highlighted the work and impact of various service teams, including their quality evaluation efforts.
- **Strengthening Dialogue on Course Evaluations:** Open discussions between the Direction and student representatives to establish an effective course evaluation process and results communication.
- **Increased Student Collaboration:** Students are now more actively involved in evaluation processes, ensuring their perspectives shape quality enhancements.
- **Enhancing Quality Documentation Practices:** We applied a data-driven approach to organise our quality documentation, enhancing institutional transparency and compliance.
- **Reviving Institutional Audits:** In 2024, departmental and service audits were relaunched, starting with the Albert Hirschman Centre on Democracy and the International Economics Department.
- **Annual Reporting:** The first Quality Annual Report has been launched to provide a comprehensive overview of quality assurance at the Institute.

“ 84% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with their stay in the Institute's residences. ”

GWENDOLINE **MUNCH**, Housing Administration

What Challenges Did We Encounter?

Inconsistent Evaluation and Reporting Practices

Departments vary in their approach to designing evaluation surveys and sharing reports, leading to inconsistencies. To address this challenge, we plan to develop standardised practices for survey conduction and report sharing while balancing confidentiality and transparency.

Lack of Structured Communication on Quality Assurance

Insufficient communication on quality efforts was identified as a weakness during the accreditation renewal process. We have made significant progress in this area. As a next step, we plan to further develop and implement a structured communication plan to regularly update stakeholders on quality assurance initiatives at the Institute.

Budgetary Constraints Affecting Database Improvements

Our current database is lacking structure that would allow us to navigate, filter, and analyse the information. We do not have the financial resources to develop a customised solution; therefore, we need to prioritise the most important and cost-effective system modifications.

Making Course Evaluations Public

There is a hesitation to allow student access to all course evaluations. We would like to continue facilitating a discussion between faculty and students to establish a transparent yet fair approach to evaluation accessibility.

Need for Qualtrics Training

To improve the quality of our surveys, we need to provide Qualtrics training sessions for our staff, enhancing their survey design and data analysis skills.

“ One of the biggest challenges is making quality appealing to all target audiences. ”

PIERRE-ANDRÉ **FINK**, Deputy Head of Library

What Are Our Future Goals?

The Institute’s Quality Roadmap Ahead

In 2025, we plan to continue working on enhancing Quality Assurance at the Institute, with a focus on the following strategic goals:

- Enhance reporting and survey coordination among departments and services to ensure more systematic sharing of relevant quality data;
- Place a strong focus on course satisfaction reports, promoting the wider sharing of results across the Institute;
- Continue developing strategies to boost engagement and response rates for key surveys;
- Explore engaging quality communication formats, such as student testimonials and videos, to better convey quality efforts;
- Launch an Employee Satisfaction Survey to gather insights and enhance institutional practices;
- Establish a practice of producing an annual Quality Report to demonstrate our progress in quality evaluation and communication at the Institute;
- Ensure QA documentation aligns with accreditation standards and requirements.

“ In 2025, the Executive Direction aims to simplify processes, improve standards, and strengthen our culture of excellence, while ensuring clear and transparent communication. ”

BRUNO CHATAGNAT, Director of Administration



Quality Assurance
<https://www.graduateinstitute.ch/discover-institute/quality-at-the-institute/quality-institute>

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