

DIREZIONE GENERALE OPERE DON BOSCO  
ROMA



**SALESIAN INSTITUTIONS  
OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**POLICIES  
FOR THE SALESIAN PRESENCE  
IN HIGHER EDUCATION  
2016 - 2021**

**Rome, July 2016**

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. The Salesian mission in higher education

[01] The Salesian Congregation says its presence in the field of Higher Education is part of its mission and that the institutions of higher education, with the schools and the vocational training centres, "promote the development of the youth by the assimilation and the critical lecture of the culture and through education in the faith, in order to the Christian transformation of society."<sup>1</sup>

[02] This presence is accomplished by the promotion of academic centres under the responsibility of the provinces and animated for the guidelines of the Salesian Congregation or in shared responsibility with other religious institutions, and by the presence of Salesians working in higher education institutions exercising management, teaching or research responsibilities. The presence also extends to the action of those Salesians who take care of the management and the animation of student residences or perform a specific pastoral work for young students in Salesian or non-Salesian institutions.

### 2. The process developed by the Salesian Institutions for Higher Education (IUS)

[03] Since 1997, as part of the government's program for the period 1996-2002, and by initiative of the former Rector Major of the Salesians, Don Juan Edmundo Vecchi, was created a service of the Generalate addressed the IUS, a support and animation service that since 2002 is part of the Department for Youth Ministry. The specific task assigned to the responsible of this service motivated the development of a particular experience of animation and accompaniment of the Salesian presence in higher education.

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<sup>1</sup> *Regulations of the Society of St. Francis de Sales*, 13.

### 3. Challenges to the Salesian presence in higher education

[08] Higher education institutions have undergone profound changes in recent years, not only as a result of the processes that affect this level, but also as a result of the transformations that characterize the social, cultural and economic context of the societies where they are located. These changes have produced a higher level of complexity in their organization and in the management model required to meet the demands they face from society in accomplishing their core functions.

[09] As Higher Education institutions of Christian inspiration, Catholic nature and Salesian identity<sup>4</sup>, the IUS also face the challenge of proposing, consistently with the specific task assigned to them within the Church, a proposal for life that, based in faith, enters into dialogue with the knowledge and the science in the context of the new evangelization and an educative - pastoral model inspired by the Preventive System.

[10] The IUS face a triple challenge: firstly, to ensure the quality of their educative and cultural proposal; secondly, to guarantee the fulfilment of his pastoral educational purpose, according to the charismatic Salesian identity; and finally, achieve an economic and financial sustainability to ensure its continuity in time. These challenges demand of the IUS to move together into the process of defining their own model of being present in higher education and to exercise their core functions of teaching, research and service to society.

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Identity*, n. 14.

## 5. Conditions for the applications of the policies

[15] The implementation of these policies implies the firm determination and commitment of the institutions to perform a set way of reflection and action that contributes to the development of a common educative heritage in the field of higher education and the consolidation of each particular presence according to the guidelines of the common identity defined<sup>6</sup>.

[16] The application of these policies will be effective through the coordination of the roles and responsibilities of the different governance and animation structures of the Congregation, related to the orientation of the Salesian Institutions of Higher Education: the Department for Youth Ministry, the provinces and the IUS.

[17] The application should take into account the cultural, social and religious places where the institutions are located. For this reason it shall be adopted a more contextualized model of implementation, which based on the decisions taken within the General Assembly, takes effect across the Continental Conferences and other forms of meeting, oriented to the reflection and practical application of these policies.

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Identity*, n. 18.



## **POLICIES THAT REFER TO THE IDENTITY AND MISSION OF IUS**

[22] 1. Ensure an on-going and deep reflection on the identity and mission of the Salesian presence in higher education, which is expressed in a university educative - pastoral model and the preferential option for the youth of the popular classes.

[23] 2. Guarantee in each institution an active Salesian presence, both quantitative and qualitative, made up of religious and collaborators, capable of directing and animating a project at cultural, scientific, academic and pastoral level.

## **POLICIES THAT REFER TO THE INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTH OF THE IUS**

[24] 3. Ensure an efficient human and economical and financial management of the IUS institution to promote sustainable self-reliance.

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## **POLICIES THAT REFER TO THE EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL IMPACT**

[25] 4. Guarantee the quality and the relevance of the formation of its students inspired by the model by the principles of the preventive system of Don Bosco ensuring their personal and professional growth, and their formation to be committed and productive citizens of the country.

[26] 5. Promote a social and cultural impact through academic activity in any IUS institution. It shall strive to contribute to better understanding of the social situation and its transformation through study and research. In this endeavour, it shall concentrate especially on those aspects that concern the living conditions of the young and care for the marginalised.