

## The External Evaluation Report of a Doctoral Study Domain

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### I. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter, the following shall be summarized:

- the context in which this external evaluation report was drafted (**the type of evaluation, the period of the evaluation visit, the composition of the Experts Committee** etc.);
- details about the doctoral school(s) of which the doctoral domain under review is part (number of doctoral advisors, number of students, institutional context, short history etc.);
- details about the doctoral study domain under review (number of students, institutional context, short history etc.).

This report is written in the frames of the institutional evaluation visit - IOSUD / doctoral study domain „Economics and International Business” of The Bucharest University of Economic studies. The period of evaluation is 26.07-30.07.2021.

The composition of the domain expert panel is the following:

1	Prof.univ.dr. LUȚAS Mihaela Coordinator	
2	Prof.univ.dr. STUKALO Natalia International expert	
3	IONAȘCU Alina PhD student	

The report is written by Nataliia Stukalo (international expert).

Bucharest University of Economic Studies (ASE) was initially established in 1913 as Academy of Higher Commerce and Industrial Studies and nowadays has more than 100 years history of success as well-known and internationally recognised university. The University grants „PhD in Economics” for 100 years (since 1921). Starting with 2005 ASE organizes its educational process following the European study cycles including doctoral studies focused on research based learning and including two components: a training program based on advanced academic studies and an individual scientific research programme. In 2011 ASE was recognised as the university of advanced research and education as a result of institutional evaluation

<sup>1</sup> Each time when applicable the information shall be presented gender-wise.



according to the national regulations (the confirmation is provided in the Annex D-02 of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR)).

There are 11 study programmes within 10 study fields at ASE in accordance with the information provided by the University in table 1 of the SAR with the reference to Government Decision no. 640/2019, Government Decision no. 641/2019 and OMENCS no. 5382/2016 and confirmed by the University management during the zoom-meeting on July 26 2021.

Number of Doctoral Advisors at IOSUD is 208. IOSUD has sufficient institutional capacity and meets the key requirements and standards to the educational premises, facilities, dormitories, libraries, and the other infrastructure (the evidence is provided in the SAR Annexes IOSUD-10,11,12,13,14). Wireless connection, software, e-learning platform and the other ITC infrastructure is also efficient and available to students and teachers. This was also confirmed as a result of the physical site visit of coordinator Michaela Lutas and student expert Alina Ionascu on July 29, 2021.

According to the data summarised in table 2 of SAR - number of Romanian students registered at IOSUD is constantly growing within the last 5 years (110-111 state budget seats yearly plus increasing number of tuition-fee students from 57 in 2015 to 75 in 2019-2020). From the other side, the number of foreign students has decreased in 2019-2020 (from 45 in 2015 to 23 in 2018 and to 11 in 2019-2020). Decrease of foreign students in 2020 can be partly explained by the covid-2019 pandemic and worldwide quarantine, however this tendency existed even before pandemic, so this is the issue to be considered during strategic planning at IOSUD.

International Business and Economics (EAI) domain starts its history in 1950s when Faculty of Commerce was established and later the Romanian Institute of Foreign Trade was integrated into this Faculty. In 1976 the Faculty of Foreign Trade was established and then renamed as Faculty of International Business and Economics. Since 2005 it operates as the Doctoral School of International Business and Economics. Since 1990 more than 500 PhD students have defended their dissertations at this Doctoral School, about 15% of these students are international.

Currently this doctoral domain includes 22 PhD supervisors and 90 PhD students (the changes are confirmed by the Doctoral School representatives during the site-visit). One more Supervisor is going to retire since autumn, from the other side some candidates are ready with their PhD dissertations and in the nearest future the EAI domain will get more young supervisors.

## **II. Methods used**

The following methods and tools were used in the external evaluation process:  
Before the evaluation visit:

- The analysis of the self-assessment report of the doctoral study domain “Economics and International Business” and its Annexes;
- The analysis of documents made available by the IOSUD as the response to the panel members’ request during the evaluation visit;
- The analysis of documents, data and information available on the IOSUD/Doctoral School(s) website, in electronic format;



• Visiting (in person by coordinator and student member) the buildings included in the institution's property, comprising (indicative and non-exhaustive list, which shall be changed according to the context):

- classrooms;
- laboratories;
- the institution's library;
- research centers;
- the Career Counselling and Guidance Center;
- lecture halls for students;
- the student residences;
- the student cafeteria;
- sports ground etc.;

• Meeting/discussions with doctoral students in the doctoral study domain "Economics and International Business";

• Meeting/Discussions with the graduates of the doctoral study domain "Economics and International Business";

• Meeting/Discussions with employers of the graduates in the doctoral study domain "Economics and International Business";

• Meeting/Discussions with the school officials of the Doctoral School in which the doctoral study domain "Economics and International Business" is operating;

• Meeting/Discussions with the doctoral advisors in the doctoral study domain "Economics and International Business";

• Meeting/discussions with the representatives of the various structures including Ethics Committee, Quality Assurance Unit of the IOSUD/Doctoral School(s) in which the doctoral study domain "Economics and International Business" is operating:

- The Council of the Doctoral School, the University Senate, the Board of Directors, the Quality Assessment and Assurance Commission, the Quality Assurance Department, the Ethics Commission (including with the student representatives of these structures), Research Centers representatives;

• Application of questionnaires to doctoral students in the doctoral study domain under review.

- SWOT-analysis

### **III. Analysis of ARACIS's performance indicators**

#### **Domain A. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY**

*\*general description of domain analysis.*

There is evidence of sufficient institutional capacity and relevant resources available at IOSUD and EAI Doctoral School level. Some issues related additional funding of the students' research activities were identified. They are explained and analyzed in the related sections below.

#### **Criterion A.1. The administrative, managerial institutional structures and the financial resources**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*



This criterion is mainly met with some rooms for improvement. There is evidence that documents, procedures and processes are in line with the national legislation and institutional regulations. The IT system and software including antiplagiarism are appropriate. The financial resources are sufficient and include some additional resources including European Union funding for insitutional and individual grants. From the other side, performance indicator A1.3.3 requires special attention at insitutional lelvel. There are some other recommendations included into specific PIs and chapter V of this report.

*Standard A.1.1. The institution organizing doctoral studies (IOSUD) has implemented the effective functioning mechanisms provided for in the specific legislation on the organization of doctoral studies.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

**Performance Indicator A.1.1.1.** *The existence of specific regulations and their application at the level of the Doctoral School of the respective university doctoral study domain:*

- (a) the internal regulations of the Doctoral School;*
  - (b) the Methodology for conducting elections for the position of director of the Council of doctoral school (CSD), as well as elections by the students of their representative in CSD and the evidence of their conduct;*
  - c) the Methodologies for organizing and conducting doctoral studies (for the admission of doctoral students, for the completion of doctoral studies);*
  - d) the existence of mechanisms for recognizing the status of a Doctoral advisor and the equivalence of the doctoral degree obtained abroad;*
  - e) functional management structures (Council of the doctoral school), giving as well proof of the regularity of meetings;*
  - f) the contract for doctoral studies;*
  - g) internal procedures for the analysis and approval of proposals regarding the training for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies.*
- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*
  - analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

There is evidence that the national legislation and ASE internal regulations are respected by the EAI doctoral study domain. The key IOSUD activities including students' recruitment and admission, teaching, research, Director's elections, supervisors appointment, the Council of Doctoral Studies activities are conducted within the ASE's system of management and administration of study and research programmes and in line with Romanian legislative acts and internal regulations approved by the University's Senate. This was reflected in all materials and documents provided and confirmed by the representatives of the ASE administration. The relevant documents are available in the appendices attached to the SAR and at the University website. Some of these documents are available on Romanian only, so we discussed them among panel members and agreed that this indicator is fulfilled.

*Recommendations: No specific recommendations for this performance indicator.*

**The indicator is fulfilled**



**Performance Indicator A.1.1.2.** *The doctoral school' Regulation includes mandatory criteria, procedures and standards binding on the aspects specified in Article 17, paragraph (5) of the Government Decision No. 681/2011 on the approval of the Code of Doctoral Studies with subsequent amendments and additions.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The Regulation of Doctoral School EAI is provided in the SAR Annex SDEAI-01. It includes mandatory criteria, procedures and standards for issues specified in Article 17, Paragraph 5 of the Government Decision no. 681/ 2011, including subsequent amendments and additions. The Regulation includes provisions regarding the acceptance of new PhD supervisors, the withdrawal from the doctoral school, specifies decision-making mechanisms regarding the opportunity, the structure and the content of the advanced academic studies training programme, the procedures about the change of the PhD supervisor of a certain PhD student and the conflict mediation procedures; explains the conditions under which the doctoral programme may be interrupted and the ways to prevent fraud in scientific research, including plagiarism; ensures access to research resources. This issue is covered in detail in the SAR and was discussed among evaluation panel members. The evaluation panel member agreed that this performance indicator is met and there is sufficient evidence in the SAR and SAR Annex SDEAI-01. Physical visit of the Coordinator and the Student expert to the EAI has also confirmed that all regulations and procedures are provided under the Code of Doctoral Studies.

*Recommendations: No specific recommendations regarding the Regulation content. However it would be useful to establish Student Support service/office to provide maintenance to students when they face any issues mentioned in the Code of Doctoral Studies, to inform and explain the procedures of withdrawal and interruption of the study, the consequences of academic integrity breach, the procedure of change of the PhD supervisor, the approach to the conflict mediation, and to support students in many other issues.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

*Standard A.1.2. The IOSUD has the logistical resources necessary to carry out the doctoral studies' mission.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

There is evidence the standard A.1.2 is met and the IOSUD has relevant logistical resources (including appropriate IT system, software, antiplagiarism platform) to promote and carry out the mission of the doctoral school.

**Performance Indicator A.1.2.1.** *The existence and effectiveness of an appropriate IT system to keep track of doctoral students and their academic background.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself



Panel members - student expert Alina Ionascu and Coordinator Mihaela Lutas visited ASE on July 29, 2021 and confirmed the appropriateness of the IT system. Most of the processes in ASE, including student admission, allocation in on-site campus accommodation, scientific research management, student records, academic records, grade transcripts, scholarships, and intra-community mobility, are digitalized and processed via the IT system. During the evaluation visit students confirmed that they are happy with the IT system, WiFi access, computers availability. IT system is designed to collect and analyse data on different processes within the doctoral school, keep track of students, their academic records, etc.

*Recommendations: No specific recommendations for this performance indicator*

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

***Performance Indicator A.1.2.2. The existence and use of an appropriate software program and evidence of its use to verify the percentage of similarity in all doctoral theses.***

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

The questions on the antiplagiarism software and its usage at ASE were discussed during the meetings with ASE Administration, Ethics Committee, supervisors, students. The key facts and findings from this discussion are the following: Sistemantiplagiat.ro platform is used at ASE and this is the appropriate software to identify the percentage of similarity in the doctoral theses. ASE has implemented the Anti-plagiarism verification operational procedure which applies to all doctoral theses, books and articles supported by/published in ASE (SAR Annex IOSUD-60). The students confirmed they have one free attempt to check their theses for similarity. If a student needs to check additional papers they are expected to pay and attach the evidence of payment to the application for additional check. However the students don't see it as a problem and mention that in case of need they can pay 50 RON.

So, there is overall evidence of existence and use of an appropriate antiplagiarism software, however the number of free checks of the papers is very limited.

*Recommendations: It is recommended to ensure that students make multiple checks of all their papers, articles, chapters' drafts etc. for free.*

***The indicator is fulfilled***

***Standard A.1.3. The IOSUD makes sure that financial resources are used optimally, and the revenues obtained from doctoral studies are supplemented through additional funding besides governmental funding.***

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

There is some evidence of appropriate usage of the financial resources at IOSUD level. However there are issues with distribution of the revenues obtained from doctoral studies and the PI A.1.3.3 is not fully fulfilled.



**Performance Indicator A.1.3.1.** Existence of at least one research or institutional / human resources development grant under implementation at the time of submission of the internal evaluation file, per doctoral study domain under evaluation, or existence of at least 2 research or institutional development / human resources grant for the doctoral study domain, obtained by doctoral thesis advisors operating in the evaluated domain within the past 5 years. The grants address relevant themes for the respective domain and, as a rule, are engaging doctoral students.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

According to the SAR and its Annex SDEAI-18 there are 5 research grants including both institutional development and human resources grants obtained within the 2017-2021 the EAI PhD supervisors (Hurduseu Gheoghe, Musetescu Radu Cristian, Paraschiv Dorel Mihai, Paun Cristian Valeriu, Zaharia Rodica Milena).

4 research / institutional development / human resources grants are being implemented at the time of submission of the SAR.

The topics of the grants are quite wide and include such themes as 'Social Costs of Cancer in Romania – A Multi-Stakeholder Analysis' which is of great societal importance, but less focused on specific international business and international economics issues.

*Recommendations: It is recommended to increase number of institutional and human resources development grants focused on the specific International Business and Economics topics.*

**The indicator is fulfilled**

**Performance Indicator \*A.1.3.2.** The percentage of doctoral students active at the time of the evaluation, who for at least six months receive additional funding sources besides government funding, through scholarships awarded by individual persons or by legal entities, or who are financially supported through research or institutional / human resources development grants is not less than 20%.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The percentage of EAI doctoral students who for at least 6 month receive additional funding computed in the SAR is 24.4%. It is confirmed by the documents provided in the SAR Annex SDEAI-10. There is evidence that students received grants for 1 and 2 semester mobility to Bulgarian, German, Russian, Portugal, Lithuanian, Spain, Belgian Universities, including Erasmus+ and other European mobility grants. All additional funding are mainly European Union funding.

*Recommendations: It is recommend to diversify the sources of funding for students and develop action plan how to attract grants and scholarships from business environment, employers and the other companies, individual persons including successful graduates, the other stakeholders.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator \*A.1.3.3.<sup>2</sup>** *At least 10% of the total amount of doctoral grants obtained by the university through institutional contracts and of tuition fees collected from the doctoral students enrolled in the paid tuition system is used to reimburse professional training expenses of doctoral students (attending conferences, summer schools, training, programs abroad, publication of specialty papers or other specific forms of dissemination etc.).*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

This indicator is partially fulfilled at institutional level. According to the documents provided by the ASE and SAR the Doctoral School EAI in the period subject to evaluation (2015-2020) obtained the tuition fee of 4.506.780 lei. Out of this income, for the PhD students within the Doctoral School EAI professional training expenses were reimbursed in the amount of 39.048 lei (expenses related to participation in conferences, summer schools, courses, internships abroad, publication of specialized articles) which makes 0,84% of total revenues for the period under review.

*Recommendations: It is recommended to substantially increase amount to reimburse professional training expenses of doctoral students and ensure that at least 10% of the total amount of doctoral grants obtained by the university through institutional contracts and of tuition fees collected from the doctoral students enrolled in the paid tuition system is used for this purpose.*

**The indicator is partially fulfilled.**

## **Criterion A.2. Research infrastructure**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

Criterion A 2 is met. ASE in general and EAI Doctoral School particularly have sufficient research infrastructure, adequate venues, facilities, equipment to conduct research in the field of international business and economics.

*Standard A.2.1. The IOSUD has a modern research infrastructure to support the conduct of doctoral studies' specific activities.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

The IOSUD has adequate research infrastructure to support the conduct of EAI doctoral studies' specific activities.

**Performance Indicator A.2.1.1.** *The venues and the material equipment available to the doctoral school enable the research activities in the evaluated domain to be carried out, in line with the assumed mission and objectives (computers, specific software, equipment, laboratory equipment, library, access to international databases etc.). The research infrastructure and the provision of research services are*

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<sup>2</sup> The indicators marked with an asterisk (\*) hold a special status, referring exclusively to the evaluation of doctoral studies domains, as per Article 12 from the annex No.1 of the Order of the minister of education No. 3651/12.04.2021 approving the Methodology for evaluating university doctoral studies and the system of criteria, standards and performance indicators used in the evaluation. In case they are not met, the Agency extends a period of maximum 3 years to IOSUD to correct the respective deficiencies.





presented to the public through a specific platform. The research infrastructure described above, which was purchased and developed within the past 5 years will be presented distinctly.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

There is evidence of strong and sufficient material equipment and the venues. The physical visit of the Coordinator and Student member confirmed that information provided in the SAR. EAI activities take place in educational establishments owned by ASE including lecture rooms, training rooms, seminar rooms, laboratories, online platforms. The rooms are adequately equipped with appropriate computers and multimedia systems (video and overhead projectors, projection screens, flipcharts, video conferencing equipment, TV studio, etc.). Some additional evidence is provided in the SAR Annexes IOSUD-19 and IOSUD-20 as well as visible on the pictures made during the physical visit of Coordinator and the Student expert on July 29. ASE also has facilities for Internet wireless access, including suitable furniture, and uses licensed software.

To carry out research, PhD students also have access to the infrastructure part of IOSUD-ASE resources and permanent access to the halls and laboratories of REI Department.

There is also Research Centre which is strongly linked to the research area of EAI doctoral domain. This Research Centre involves not only EAI supervisors and students, but also ASE graduates, so students can benefit from working in such centres a lot.

*Recommendations: As a suggestion for further improvement – the Research Centre could expand its activities, involve international researchers and experts from the other fields in order to grow as interdisciplinary and crossborder Research Center creating new opportunities for doctoral students.*

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

### **Criterion A.3. Quality of Human Resources**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

The quality of human resources of the EAI doctoral school is high. All indicators are met and supervisors fulfill the most criteria and performance indicators, they are research active and benefit from international awareness. The issue requiring attention is need of supporting supervisors with professional development trainings to improve and update their teaching and supervision skills.

*Standard A.3.1. At the level of each domain there are sufficient qualified staff to ensure the conduct of doctoral study program.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

The standard A.3.1 is met and there is evidence of sufficiency of the highly qualified research supervisors to ensure the conduct of the EAI doctoral study program.



**Performance Indicator A.3.1.1.** *Minimum three doctoral thesis advisors within that doctoral domain, and at least 50% of them (but no less than three) meet the minimum standards of the National Council for Attestation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates (CNATDCU) in force at the time when the evaluation is carried out, which standards are required and mandatory for obtaining the enabling certification.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The SAR includes information that 16 out of 22 PhD supervisors currently affiliated to Doctoral school EAI (respectively 72,7%) comply with CNADTCU and supports this information with SAR Annex SDEAI-14. As a result of communication with representatives of the Doctoral School it was identified that 3 more supervisors (so 19 out of 22) are now fulfilling CNADTCU requirements.

*Recommendations: It is recommended to introduce annual regular trainings for PhD Supervisors to support their professional development and provide them with the opportunities to update/improve their teaching and supervision-related skills. For instance, a series of short courses or training courses such as "Heutagogy and Cybergogy in Supervision Process", "Supporting PhD Students Online", "Effective Formative Feedback", "Cross-Cultural Supervision", "Types and Styles of Research Supervision" etc.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator \*A.3.1.2.** *At least 50% of all doctoral advisors have a full-time employment contract for an indefinite period with the IOSUD.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

According to the SAR and information provided in SAR Annex SDEAI-13 currently 18 out of 22 PhD Supervisors of EAI Doctoral School are tenured in IOSUD-ASE. In evaluated period 2015-2020 within the field of academic doctoral studies in International Business and Economics, 24 PhD supervisors have been affiliated to SD EAI, 2 of them retiring as a result of reaching the legal retirement age.

*Recommendations: The EAI Doctoral School, its students and supervisors would benefit if some foreign supervisors are employed at EAI doctoral domain.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator A.3.1.3.** *The study subjects in the education program based on advanced higher education studies pertaining to the doctoral domain are taught by teaching staff or researchers who are doctoral thesis advisors / certified doctoral thesis advisors, professors / CS I or lecturer / CS II, with proved expertise in the field of the study subjects they teach, or other specialists in the field who meet the standards established by the institution in relation with the aforementioned teaching and research functions, as provided by the law.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself



- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The teaching staff has relevant proven expertise in the field of the subject delivered, PhD/habilitation, and meet relevant standards and requirements. CVs as confirmation are provided in the SAR Annex CSUD-65. Communication with PhD Supervisors during the site-visit, their publications reviewed, study field conferences, professional events, and trainings attendance demonstrate their proven expertise in the field. From the other side, there is lack of evidence of continuous improvement of teaching skills.

*Recommendations: In addition to continuous professional development in the study field it is recommended to update and improve teaching skills through relevant trainings on the constant basis. For instance, "Social Media tools in modern teaching", "Motivate your students effectively", "PhD class management", "Andragogy: How to teach adults in efficient way", "Conflict Resolution", "Integrated and contextualized learning", "Problem-based and project-based learning" etc.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator \*A.3.1.4.** *The percentage of doctoral thesis advisors who concomitantly coordinate more than 8 doctoral students, but no more than 12, who are themselves studying in doctoral programs<sup>3</sup> does not exceed 20%.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

None of the PhD supervisors coordinates more than 8 PhD students at the same time. Evidence is provided in the SAR Annex SDEAI-16 and Annex SDEAI-17. The average number of PhD Students per Supervisor is 3.

*Recommendations: No specific recommendations for this performance indicator.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

*Standard A.3.2. The Doctoral advisors within the domain are carrying out a scientific activity visible at international level.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

The online meetings and analysis of the documents are evidence that the PhD supervisors within the EAI doctoral domain are internationally visible and the standard A.3.2 is met.

**Performance Indicator A.3.2.1.** *At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in the evaluated domain have at least 5 Web of Science- or ERIH-indexed publications in magazines of impact, or other achievements of relevant significance for that domain, including international-level contributions that indicate progress in scientific research - development - innovation for the evaluated domain. The*

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<sup>3</sup> 3 years for the doctoral university studies with the duration stipulated at Article 159, paragraph (3), respectively 4 years for the doctoral university studies with the duration stipulated at Article 174, paragraph (3) of the Law of national education No.1/2011 with subsequent amendments and additions, with additional extension periods approved as per Article 39, paragraph (3) of the Code of doctoral studies approved by the GD No. 681/2011 with subsequent amendments and additions.



*mentioned doctoral thesis advisors enjoy international awareness within the past five years, consisting of: membership on scientific boards of international publications and conferences; membership on boards of international professional associations; guests in conferences or expert groups working abroad, or membership on doctoral defense commissions at universities abroad or co-leading with universities abroad. For Arts and Sports and Physical Education Sciences, doctoral thesis advisors shall prove their international visibility within the past five years by their membership on the boards of professional associations, membership in organizing committees of arts events and international competitions, membership on juries or umpire teams in artistic events or international competitions.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

18 out of 22 PhD supervisors (which makes 81,8%) meet the requirements of PI A.3.2.1. The evidence is provided in Annex SDEAI-18. The review of the publications and the other criteria fulfilment demonstrates that the Supervisors mainly meet criteria 1,2 and 3 related to WoS and ERIH publications, being reviewers for international journals and international conferences. However, criteria 4,5, and 6 (membership in international professional associations boards, expert groups abroad, engagement into the commissions for defending doctoral theses abroad) are addressed only in minor cases.

*Recommendations: It is recommended to expand international presence of EAI PhD supervisors in such areas as membership on boards of international professional associations and participation in expert groups working abroad, membership on doctoral defense commissions at universities abroad or co-leading with universities abroad.*

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

***Performance Indicator \*A.3.2.2.*** *At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in a specific doctoral study domain continue to be active in their scientific field, and acquire at least 25% of the score requested by the minimal CNATDCU standards in force at the time of the evaluation, which are required and mandatory for acquiring their enabling certificate, based on their scientific results within the past five years.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

This indicator is fulfilled. More than 80% of PhD supervisors reached at least 25% of the score requested by CNATDCU minimal standards. Confirmation is provided in SAR Annex SDEAI-19. The most dissertation supervisors are research active, have relevant publications including articles presenting original scientific contributions published in an ISI-rated journal with absolute influence score (AIS) nonzero, have citations in these journals, and research projects/grants won in national or international competitions.

*Recommendations: No specific recommendations in this performance indicator.*

***The indicator is fulfilled.***



## **Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

*\*general description of domain analysis.*

The major performance indicators related to educational effectiveness are fulfilled with the exception of PI B.2.1.1 which is partially fulfilled. The quality and diversity of candidates is good and meets major requirements. The content of the program is relevant and mainly appropriate, however there are some issues related to the disciplines relevant to the scientific research training of doctoral students, in-depth the research methodology and the statistical data processing.

### **Criterion B.1. The number, quality and diversity of candidates enrolled for the admission contest**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

The criterion B.1 is met and demonstrates sufficient number, quality and diversity of the candidates enrolled at EAI. More international students could be attracted.

*Standard B.1.1. The institution organizing doctoral studies has the capacity to attract candidates from outside the higher education institution or a number of candidates exceeding the number of seats available.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

EAI Doctoral school has appropriate capacity to attract candidates from institutions outside ASE. The standard B.1.1 is met.

**Performance Indicator \*B.1.1.1.** *The ratio between the number of graduates of masters' programs of other higher education institutions, national or foreign, who have enrolled for the doctoral admission contest within the past five years and the number of seats funded by the state budget, put out through contest within the doctoral domain is at least 0.2 or the ratio between the number of candidates within the past five years and the number of seats funded by the state budget put out through contest within the doctoral studies domain is at least 1,2.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

According to the data from Admission database the ratio between the number of MSc graduates from the other higher education institutions, outside IOSUD-ASE, enrolling for admission in the last five years and the number of state-funded places available for admission in the Doctoral School EAI fluctuates between 0.7 and 1 during the 2015-2020. So, it significantly exceeds the required minimum 0.2. It should be also noted that some PhD students are practitioners and working in the industry at quite high management positions in the National Bank, for example. It was confirmed during the site visit to the Doctoral School. Anca Parasciv is one of such PhD students.

*Recommendations: No specific recommendations for this performance indicator.*

***The indicator is fulfilled.***



Standard B.1.2 Candidates admitted to doctoral studies demonstrate academic, research and professional performance.

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

The standard B.1.2 is met. The admission process is transparent and based on the relevant selection criteria. The students demonstrate appropriate research and professional performance. The dropout rate fluctuates within the maximum allowed frames, but considering the significant fluctuations it is recommended to investigate the reasons and develop PhD student retention policy.

**Performance Indicator \*B.1.2.1.** Admission to doctoral study programs is based on selection criteria including: previous academic, research and professional performance, their interest for scientific or arts/sports research, publications in the domain and a proposal for a research subject. Interviewing the candidate is compulsory, as part of the admission procedure.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

There is no relevant response in the SAR addressing this performance indicator. Potentially this is because of translation issues.

The available relevant documents, regulations on admission issues were reviewed at the web-site.

The anonymous students survey conducted by the evaluation panel included a question "To what extent is the admission process to university doctoral studies based on the academic, research and professional?". 10 out of 21 students participating the survey have confirmed "to very large extent", 10 - either "to a large extent" and just one response was "to a small extent".

The results of the student survey as well as selection criteria were also discussed by the evaluation panel members and it is agreed that this performance indicator is fulfilled.

*Recommendations: No specific recommendations for this performance indicator.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator B.1.2.2.** The expelling rate, including renouncement / dropping out of doctoral students 3, respectively 4, years after admission<sup>4</sup> does not exceed 30%.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

According to the SAR the dropout rate of PhD students in the Doctoral School International Business and Economics fluctuates between 0 and 24% during the last five years, so it doesn't exceed the maximum allowed 30%. From the other

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<sup>4</sup> 3 years for the doctoral university studies with the duration stipulated at Article 159, paragraph (3), respectively 4 years for the doctoral university studies with the duration stipulated at Article 174, paragraph (3) of the Law of national education No. 1/2011 with subsequent amendments and additions.



side, significant fluctuations demonstrate need of additional analysis of the dropout rates, reasons for fluctuations as well as development of retention policy.

*Recommendations: It is suggested to analyze the reasons for dropout rate fluctuations and develop students' retention policy. Potentially it could be done through Student Support Office/Service.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

## **Criterion B.2. The content of doctoral programs**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

The most performance indicators related to the criterion of the content of doctoral program are fulfilled. The content of the programme is appropriate and ensures students get relevant learning outcomes. However there is room for improvement in training of some advanced research skills as well as in the content of some disciplines delivered.

*Standard B.2.1. The training program based on advanced university studies is appropriate to improve doctoral students' research skills and to strengthen ethical behavior in science.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

The training program is based on advanced studies and it allows students to get relevant research skills and strengthen ethical behaviour in science. It was also identified that the content of some courses and literature sources used could be improved according to the recommendations provided.

**Performance Indicator B.2.1.1.** *The training program based on advanced academic studies includes at least 3 disciplines relevant to the scientific research training of doctoral students; at least one of these disciplines is intended to study in-depth the research methodology and/or the statistical data processing.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

The SAR presents list of four courses included into the training programme and two of them "Ethics and Academic Integrity" and "Applying quantitative and qualitative methods in scientific research" are relevant to the scientific research training. The other two courses "Company strategy and policy on international markets" and "International political economy and global governance" are mainly international business and economics field related courses. It is confirmed through review and discussion with panel members of the syllabuses provided in the appendices.

The panel members discussed this performance indicator several times, requested additional information from doctoral school and explanations how this indicator is interpreted. The Coordinator of the evaluation panel had additional discussion with the representatives of the doctoral school and also with ARACIS representatives. The Coordinator has communicated the outcomes of the discussions to evaluation panel members and it was agreed that looking in depth at the indicator, all the four disciplines included in the curricula are relevant for the scientific research training of the doctoral students in International Business, and the one named "Quantitative and qualitative methods in scientific research" is covering the second part of the indicator,



the one concerning at least one of these disciplines is intended to study in-depth the research methodology and/or the statistical data processing. The specific disciplines for International Business (Companies strategies on international markets, and International political economy and global governance) are relevant for the field of research covered by the topics of the Doctoral School in Economics and International Business.

The courses syllabuses include literature sources which were published by 2017 and there is lack of the up-to-date literature sources presenting advanced research in the field.

*Recommendations: It is recommended to introduce a separate course on statistical data processing and some other in-depth research methodology courses as electives or training units.*

*The syllabuses of the existing courses could be updated and based on the more recently published peer-reviewed articles, up-to-date academic literature presenting the modern advanced research in the field of international business and economics. It is also important to encourage students to use international publications and research papers in English.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator B.2.1.2.** *At least one discipline is dedicated to Ethics and Intellectual Property in scientific research or there are well-defined topics on these subjects within a discipline taught in the doctoral program.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

This performance indicator is essentially fulfilled as there is one discipline "Ethics and academic integrity" which covers ethics issues. The student survey outcomes demonstrates that students consider this course relevant to their thesis writing and their study programme (20 out of 21 students confirmed that they agree to a large extent or to a very large extent).

However, review of the syllabus demonstrates that there is lack of themes covering intellectual property issues.

*Recommendations: It is recommended to introduce a separate course devoted to intellectual property in scientific research, its characteristics, the legal and social means developed to encourage and control it, types of intellectual property, violation of intellectual property, copyright, patent and trademark regimes, licensing and trade secrets. Alternatively the course "Ethics and Academic Integrity" could be revised and improved in order to cover these themes.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator B.2.1.3.** *The IOSUD has mechanisms to ensure that the academic training program based on advanced university studies addresses „the learning outcomes“, specifying the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy that doctoral students should acquire after completing each discipline or through the research activities<sup>5</sup>.*

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<sup>5</sup> Or by what the graduate should know, understand and to be able to do, according to the provisions of the Methodology of 17 March 2017 regarding inscription and registration of higher education qualifications in the National Register of Qualifications in Higher Education (RNCIS) approved by the Order No.3475/2017 with subsequent amendments and additions.





- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

There is evidence the EAI is an advanced academic training programme which ensures its students get relevant competencies, learning outcomes, and practical skills including critical-constructive use of advanced cognitive acquisitions, practical skills for research and prediction activities in the field of economics and international business, integrated application of research concepts, methods, techniques and tools for assessing the international economic environment, put into practice of the norms and values of professional and scientific ethics, in-depth knowledge of international business and economics. It is confirmed during the site visit, discussion with PhD students, graduates, and as a result review of the curricula, course syllabuses, and the other documents provided in the SAR Appendices. From the other side, it was identified that students would benefit from developing or improving additional skills, for instance, to search for and get research grants, to prepare research to be published in international peer-reviewed journals, to communicate and disseminate the results of the research, to get advanced research leadership skills, etc.

It also was confirmed by results of students survey conducted by the evaluation panel which has demonstrated that 21 out of 21 students agree 'to a large extent' or 'to a very large extent' that it is necessary to introduce "an academic course (e.g. for drawing up research reports, producing scientific articles, writing projects for funding from national or international grants, etc.)"

*Recommendations: It is suggested to introduce some skill units and/or elective courses allowing students to get additional advanced competencies related to scientific research training at PhD level. For instance, "The Reflective Practitioner", "Action Research", "Communicating Your Research", "Leadership: Doctoral Theory and Practice", "Research Fundraising", "How to Publish in International Peer-reviewed Journals" etc.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator B.2.1.4.** All along the duration of the doctoral training, doctoral students in the domain receive counselling/guidance from functional guidance commissions, which is reflected in written guidance and feedback or regular meeting.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The evaluation of the outcomes of the discussion with students is resulted with the findings that in addition to the supervision covered by their supervisor, students get feedback and recommendations from operational advisory boards in their fields of research interests. Such boards are assigned together with the PhD supervisor and advise students via written and/or oral feedback. Students are satisfied with the level of feedback and support provided by supervisors and advisory boards.



The results of anonymous student survey conducted by the evaluation panel confirm fulfilment of this performance indicator – 15 out of 21 students think that they benefit at a very large extent from the support of the members of the committee to support their research work and PhD thesis (online meetings, on-site meetings, asynchronous communication). 6 more students confirm they are benefiting ‘at a large extent’.

*Recommendations: No specific recommendations in this section.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator B.2.1.5.** For a doctoral study domain, the ratio between the number of doctoral students and the number of teaching staff/researchers providing doctoral guidance must not exceed 3:1.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution’s documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution’s documents and the evaluation visit itself

According to the data provided by the EAI doctoral domain and documents presented in the Annex SDEAI-30 at the level of the doctoral field International Business and Economics the ratio between PhD students and the number of staff/researchers engaged in advising is 1,34, so this performance indicator is fulfilled.

*Recommendations: No specific recommendations in this section.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

### **Criterion B.3. The results of doctoral studies and procedures for their evaluation.**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

*Standard B.3.1. Doctoral students capitalize on the research through presentations at scientific conferences, scientific publications, technological transfer, patents, products and service orders.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

This standard is fulfilled. Doctoral students actively participate conferences and other scientific events and publish the outcomes of their research in international journal. It is recommended to diversify their activities geographically with Asian and American events as well as with technological transfers, patents, products and services.

**Performance Indicator B.3.1.1.** For the evaluated domain, the evaluation commission will be provided with at least one paper or some other relevant contribution per doctoral student who has obtained a doctor’s title within the past 5 years. From this list, the members of the evaluation commission shall randomly select 5 such papers / relevant contributions per doctoral study domain for review. At least 3 selected papers must contain significant original contributions in the respective domain.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution’s documents and the evaluation visit itself



- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The SAR reports that all PhD students completing their doctorate in the last five years, validated by CNATDCU by 30 September 2020, have a relevant scientific contribution, expressed in the articles published in academic journals in and/or outside the country. The list of such papers is provided in SAR Annex SDEAI-31. The five randomly selected papers from the list mentioned are the following:

- 1) Marica VG, Horobet A. Conditional Granger Causality and Genetic Algorithms in VAR Model Selection. *Symmetry*. 2019; 11(8):1004. <https://doi.org/10.3390/sym11081004>
- 2) Nagel D. The Fate of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Multilateralism. *European Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*. 2017; Vol.9. Issue 2. <https://ejist.ro/files/pdf/416.pdf>
- 3) Adrian A. The Effects of Great Britain's Exit from the EU. "Ovidius" University Annals, Economics Sciences Series. Volume XVII, Issue 1/2017. <https://stec.univ-ovidius.ro/html/anale/RO/2017/Section-I/2.pdf>
- 4) Stiber EO. CAGE Analysis of China's Trade Globalization. *European Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*. 2014; Vol.6, Issue 1. <https://ejist.ro/files/pdf/382.pdf>
- 5) Chiriac C., Hurduzeu G., Chiriac A.-A., Zavera I.-C. Mobile Payments and Major Shifts in Consumer Behaviour. *Oradea Journal of Business and Economics*. 2018. Volume III, issue 1. [http://ojbe.steconomieuoradea.ro/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/OJBE\\_31\\_p7\\_76-83.pdf](http://ojbe.steconomieuoradea.ro/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/OJBE_31_p7_76-83.pdf)

All these five selected papers are reviewed and there is evidence they contain original contributions in the domain of international business and economics.

*Recommendations: No specific recommendations for this performance indicators.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator \*B.3.1.2.** *The ratio between the number of presentations of doctoral students who completed their doctoral studies within the evaluated period (past 5 years), including posters, exhibitions made at prestigious international events (organized in the country or abroad) and the number of doctoral students who have completed their doctoral studies within the evaluated period (past 5 years) is at least 1.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

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There are 44 PhD students who received the PhD title in the last five years in the field of International Business and Economics, validated by CNADCU by 30 September 2020. All of them have attended at least one international scientific event in or outside the country and this is one of the minimal requirement for the PhD title awarding. The lists of conferences and the other events attended are provided in SAR Annex SDEAI-32. The ratio between the number of participations



to prestigious international events and the number of PhD students getting a PhD title validated by CNATDCU by 30 September 2020 is 1,22.

*Recommendations: It is recommended to extend geography of conferences attended with Asian and American events.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

*Standard B.3.2. The Doctoral School engages a significant number of external scientific specialists in the commissions for public defense of doctoral theses in the analyzed domain.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

There is evidence that EAI engages appropriate number of external scientific specialists in the commissions for public defense of doctoral theses. It would be reasonable to engage foreign researchers to make the research results of the EAI doctoral domain even more visible internationally and to widely disseminate its research outcomes abroad.

**Performance Indicator \*B.3.2.1.** *The number of doctoral theses allocated to one specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the evaluated IOSUD should not exceed two (2) in a year for the theses coordinated by the same doctoral thesis advisor.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

According to the data presented in the SAR Annex SDEAI-33 39 external members (from the universities other than ASE) participated in the vivas of the 44 doctoral theses during the evaluation period. Maximum three theses were allocated to the same external referee within one academic year.

*Recommendations: It would be reasonable to engage foreign researchers to make the research results of the EAI doctoral domain even more visible internationally and to widely disseminate its research outcomes abroad.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator \*B.3.2.2.** *The ratio between the doctoral theses allocated to one scientific specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the institution where the defense on the doctoral thesis is organized, and the number of doctoral theses presented in the same doctoral study domain in the doctoral school should not exceed 0.3, considering the past five years. Only those doctoral study domains in which minimum ten doctoral theses have been presented within the past five years should be analyzed.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

There are 44 doctoral theses have been presented and the ratio between the doctoral theses allocated to one scientific specialist coming from a higher education



institution, other than ASE EAI, and the number of doctoral theses presented in the same doctoral study domain in the EAI doctoral school is 0,2, so it meets the performance indicator (lower than 0,3 for the evaluation period. The data are presented in SAR Annex SDEAI-34.

*Recommendations: No specific recommendations for this performance indicator.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

## **Domain C. QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

*\*general description of domain analysis.*

The quality management is essentially in line with requirements and generally meets expectations. However there is room for improvements of mechanisms to collect and consider feedback from students, graduates and employers.

### **Criterion C.1. Existence and periodic implementation of the internal quality assurance system**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

There is evidence of existence of the ASE-IOSUD internal quality assurance system and relevant procedures at EAI doctoral school domain.

*Standard C.1.1. There are an institutional framework and procedures in place and relevant internal quality assurance policies, applied for monitoring the internal quality assurance.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

There are ASE-IOSUD institutional framework and procedures in place. The procedures are applied at the level of EAI doctoral domain with some room for improvement of mechanisms to action students' feedback.

**Performance Indicator C.1.1.1.** *The Doctoral school in the respective university study domain shall demonstrate the continuous development of the evaluation process and its internal quality assurance following a procedure developed and applied at the level of the IOSUD, the following assessed criteria being mandatory:*

- (a) the scientific work of Doctoral advisors;*
- (b) the infrastructure and logistics necessary to carry out the research activity;*
- (c) the procedures and subsequent rules based on which doctoral studies are organized;*
- (d) the scientific activity of doctoral students;*
- (e) the training program based on advanced academic studies of doctoral students;*
- (f) social and academic services (including for participation at different events, publishing papers etc.) and counselling made available to doctoral students.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

The IOSUD-ASE regulation on internal quality assurance procedure is located in SAR Annex CSUD-68 (available only in Romanian). As a result of online meeting with the representatives of the Commission for Quality Evaluation and Assurance



(CEAC) members / Quality Assurance Department on July 27, 2021 it is found out that ASE has developed and applies regularly an internal procedure to assess and monitor the progress of doctoral schools. The students surveys are conducted and analysed regularly and the internal QA procedures cover the scientific activity of the PhD supervisors, the infrastructure and logistics necessary to carry out research, the procedures and regulations regulating doctoral studies, the scientific activity of doctoral students, as well as the training program based on advanced university studies of doctoral students. At the same time meetings with employers and graduates demonstrated that they could be engaged into the internal QA processes in more efficient way.

*Recommendations: It is recommended to diversify the types of surveys conducted and develop programme-related questionnaire for employers and graduates to collect their specific feedback in order to consider it for the programme improvement.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator \*C.1.1.2.** *Mechanisms are implemented during the stage of the doctoral study program to enable feedback from doctoral students allowing to identify their needs, as well as their overall level of satisfaction with the doctoral study program in order to ensure continuous improvement of the academic and administrative processes. Following the analysis of the results, there is evidence that an action plan was drafted and implemented.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

The mechanisms to collect and consider PhD students' feedback are implemented. The annual students' satisfaction questionnaire is used to get PhD students' feedback and identify their needs at ASE level. The results of the annual questionnaires are presented in the SAR Annex SDEAI-35. The response rate is quite low (5-8 students annually). The students mainly demonstrate quite high level of satisfaction.

The evaluation panel has also conducted the alternative students' survey which in some questions confirmed students' general satisfaction with the courses delivered and teachers' performance. From the other side, the questions related to financial support by ASE for participation in conferences or publications as well as financial support for the scientific and teaching work (except budget grants) were answered 'to a small extent' and 'to a very small extent' by 10 out of 21 students participating the survey; 5 more students responded 'to an average extent'.

There are some additional relevant suggestions provided by students via survey, such as to increase funding for the settlement of participation in national / international conferences of doctoral students because strict criteria for obtaining funding (certain unrealistic deadlines) do not help students; to support students with some additional courses; to create collaborative environment among PhD students to have common projects, publications, etc. Such students needs and expectations could be considered and included into the action plan as well as included into the development strategy.



*Recommendations: It is recommended to improve approach to student satisfaction surveys. The suggestion is to conduct students surveys after each particular course before marking (ensuring full anonymity) as well as ask for feedback through general surveys after the defence of the PhD dissertation and a result of the study program completion. The outcomes of the survey should be discussed at all levels (by the supervisors, departments, EAI Council, IOSUD, ASE) in order to better understand student's needs not only directly related to the research process, but also their psychological, financial, social, logistics, infrastructure, and other needs as well as their feedback on different services provided by ASE. It is also important to inform the students how their feedback was considered and actioned by the Doctoral School. It will help not only to improve the quality of the study programme, clearly identify students' needs, apply more student-centered approach, but also to engage them into the quality assurance process in more efficient way and show them that their feedback matters and helps to improve. There is evidence from practice that if students see how their feedback is considered and helps to improve the processes, the response rate increases.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

## **Criterion C.2. Transparency of information and accessibility of learning resources**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

The transparency of information and accessibility of learning resources is ensured at the level of ASE and EIA doctoral domain. The general recommendation is to ensure availability of all materials and relevant information in English.

*Standard C.2.1. Information of interest to doctoral students, future candidates and public interest information is available for electronic format consultation.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

There is evidence that all relevant information is available for all stakeholders, including students and future candidates, at the ASE\_IOSUD web-site.

**Performance Indicator C.2.1.1.** *The IOSUD publishes on the website of the organizing institution, in compliance with the general regulations on data protection, information such as:*

- (a) the Doctoral School regulation;*
- (b) the admission regulation;*
- (c) the doctoral studies contract;*
- (d) the study completion regulation including the procedure for the public presentation of the thesis;*
- (e) the content of training program based on advanced academic studies;*
- (f) the academic and scientific profile, thematic areas/research themes of the Doctoral advisors within the domain, as well as their institutional contact data;*
- (g) the list of doctoral students within the domain with necessary information (year of registration; advisor);*
- (h) information on the standards for developing the doctoral thesis;*
- (i) links to the doctoral theses' summaries to be publicly presented and the date, time, place where they will be presented; this information will be communicated at least twenty days before the presentation.*
  - description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*
  - analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*



The IOSUD publishes all required information at their web-site in Romanian. The links to all required documents are provided in the SAR C.2.1.1 section.

The English version of the web-site includes some important information, but there are areas for improvement considering the IOSUD aims to accept more international students and implements internationalization strategy.

The panel members were informed that the website was hacked and is still recovering.

*Recommendations: It is recommended to improve web-site in English and ensure that all information related to the study process, all documents and regulations are available in English.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

*Standard C.2.2. The IOSUD/The Doctoral School provides doctoral students with access to the resources needed for conducting doctoral studies.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

The IOSUD and EAI doctoral domain provide students with access to the resources important for doctoral studies and research work. The access to the antiplagiarism platform is limited with one free check. All additional checks are available on the payment basis.

**Performance Indicator C.2.2.1.** *All doctoral students have free access to one platform providing academic databases relevant to the doctoral studies domain of their thesis.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

There is clear evidence that ASE provides doctoral students with free access to libraries and online platforms with relevant data bases, learning resources (articles, textbooks etc.). ASE library ([www.biblioteca.ase.ro](http://www.biblioteca.ase.ro)) has electronic access as well as substantial number of domestic and international books, subscriptions to the key program-related Romanian and foreign journals. It was confirmed by the students during online meeting with the expert panel on July 29 as well as during the in-person visit to the University by Coordinator and Student expert.

*Recommendations: No specific recommendations for this performance indicator.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator C.2.2.2.** *Each doctoral student shall have access, upon request, to an electronic system for verifying the degree of similarity with other existing scientific or artistic works.*

*- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

*- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

Each PhD student of the Doctoral School International Business and Economics have access to electronic system to identify the similarity index of their dissertation.





Students confirmed they have opportunity to check it once for free. The other attempts as well as checks of their other papers (articles, assignments etc) can be also checked for plagiarism, however students should pay for it and support their application for additional check with the payment confirmation. Such approach is quite complicated and could be revised.

*Recommendations: It is recommended to ensure that all students' papers (articles, assignments, drafted chapters of the dissertation, etc.) can be checked for similarity multiple times for free.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator C.2.2.3.** All doctoral students have access to scientific research laboratories or other facilities depending on the specific domain/domains within the Doctoral School, according to internal order procedures.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

PhD students have permanent access to all facilities, including computer classes, rooms, laboratories of the Doctoral School International Business and Economics and the Faculty REI. It was confirmed during the in-person visit by Coordinator and Student expert as well as a result of the online meeting with students on July 29, 2021.

*Recommendations: No specific recommendations for this performance indicator.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

### **Criterion C.3. Internationalization**

*\*general description of the criterion analysis.*

Criterion C.3 and all its performance indicators are fulfilled. There is evidence of good performance and progress in internationalisation activities.

*Standard C.3.1. There is a strategy in place and it is applied to enhance the internationalization of doctoral studies.*

*\*general description of the standard analysis.*

The internationalization strategy is in place and it is implemented accordingly. The strategy could be improved and consider some additional recommendations described below.

**Performance Indicator \*C.3.1.1.** IOSUD, for every evaluated domain, has concluded mobility agreements with universities abroad, with research institutes, with companies working in the field of study, aimed at the mobility of doctoral students and academic staff (e.g., ERASMUS agreements for the doctoral studies). At least 35% of the doctoral students have completed a training course abroad or other mobility forms such as attending international scientific conferences. IOSUD drafts and applies policies and measures aiming at increasing the number of doctoral students participating at mobility periods abroad, up to at least 20%, which is the target at the level of the European Higher Education Area.



- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

ASE has concluded a number of mobility agreements with universities abroad and their list is provided in the SAR Annex IOSUD-71, IOSUD-72, SDEAI-32). Within these agreements PhD students and academic staff can benefit from mobility. 17 PhD students out of 44 in the Doctoral school EAI presented their research findings at international conferences taking place abroad. It makes 38,6%, so the overall requirement is met. However it should be noted that the other forms of mobility (such as summer schools, double diploma programs, trainings, etc.) could be developed in order to improve in this indicator.

*Recommendations: It is recommended that to initiate and use other forms of students' international mobility such as summer schools, double diploma programs, trainings, etc. could be developed in order to improve in this indicator.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator C.3.1.2.** *In the evaluated doctoral study domain, support is granted, including financial support, to the organization of doctoral studies in international co-tutelage or invitation of leading experts to deliver courses/lectures for doctoral students.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
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There is evidence that EAI is active in engaging and inviting international experts to lecture for doctoral students (SAR Annex CSUD-73). One of the instances is debates with Prof. Kim, School of Social Work, Marywood University (USA). The representatives of the EAI and students during online meetings confirmed that they benefit from the lectures conducted by foreign professors.

*Recommendations: It is recommended to engage the foreign professors into the supervision process as well as to employ foreign lecturers to deliver the courses and supervise PhD students.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator C.3.1.3.** *The internationalization of activities carried out during the doctoral studies is supported by IOSUD through concrete measures (e.g., by participating in educational fairs to attract international doctoral students; by including international experts in guidance committees or doctoral committees etc.).*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The internationalization of activities within EAI is supported by different concrete means and takes place in some forms including participating in educational fairs



to attract international students, to collaboration with foreign researchers and lecturers, participating international conferences and the other events. There are also cases of co-supervision with the University Lille 1 in the case of the PhD student BADOIU MIHAELA CĂTĂLINA (2019-2020) or co-optation in the advisory board of foreign experts from Varna University of Economics, Uniwersytet Szczeciński Higher College of Technology, UAE.

The internationalisation strategy is developed and being implemented. There is evidence of sufficient progress of the EAI in this sphere.

*Recommendations: It is recommended to engage graduates to promote the EAI abroad. Another suggestion is that foreign experts could be widely engaged into the doctoral and advisory committees.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

#### IV. SWOT Analysis

<p><b><u>Strengths:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the strengths identified throughout the report will be resumed as part of the indicators' analysis. Other general strengths that do not fall within a particular indicator may be formulated.</li> <li>- Successful graduates ready to support the EAI Doctoral School;</li> <li>- Good relations with employers who are interested in the collaboration with EAI;</li> <li>- High level of research excellence of supervisors and PhD students;</li> <li>- Good relationships between students and supervisors and continued research relations among them;</li> <li>- Strong international partnerships, for instance with Harvard Business School.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Weaknesses:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the weaknesses identified throughout the report will be resumed as part of the indicators' analysis. Other general weaknesses that do not fall within a particular indicator may be formulated.</li> <li>- Lack of additional training opportunities for students, supervisors, staff;</li> <li>- Non-sufficient funding to support additional students' training, mobility and research dissemination needs;</li> <li>- Lack of consistent and comprehensive communication and public relation policy/strategy of Doctoral School.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Opportunities:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- possible lines of action for the development of the institution under review shall be identified;</li> <li>- examples of opportunities: a favorable economic environment in the proximity of the assessed institution, the uniqueness of the study programs and their relevance to the local/national market, the overall attractiveness of the study programs etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Threats:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the possible causes of the deficient aspects (the causes of the identified weaknesses), which are practically the threats to the proper functioning of the institution, shall be identified;</li> <li>- besides, there may be external threats, such as: the inopportune economic environment in the proximity of the assessed institution, the conduct of low attractiveness study programs for both candidates and the labor market etc.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishing graduates community/network (association) to monitor their career development, to promote the EAI doctoral school at national level and abroad, to use other opportunities;</li> <li>- Strengthening strategic partnership between EAI and governmental, public administration, business employers;</li> <li>- Positive image and strong competitive position of the EAI doctoral school at national level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuation of the global pandemic and its influence on the foreign students' admission, students mobility and other activities of the EAI;</li> <li>- High competition among similar doctoral schools at European level, and 'brain drain' risk.</li> </ul>
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## V. Overview of judgments awarded and of the recommendations

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI*, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
1.	PI	<b>A.1.1.2.</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It would be useful to establish Student Support service/office to provide maintenance to students when they face any issues mentioned in the Code of Doctoral Studies, to inform and explain them the procedures of withdrawal and interruption of the study, the consequences of academic integrity breach, the procedure of change of the PhD supervisor, the approach to the conflict mediation, and to support students in many other issues.</i>
2.	PI	<b>A.1.2.2</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It is recommended to ensure that students make multiple checks of all their papers, articles, chapters' drafts etc. for free.</i>
3.	PI	<b>A.1.3.2</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It is recommended to diversify the sources of funding for students and develop action plan how to attract grants and scholarships from business environment, employers and the other companies, individual persons including successful graduates, the other stakeholders.</i>
4.	PI*	<b>A.1.3.3</b>	Indicator is partially fulfilled	<i>It is recommended to substantially increase amount to reimburse professional training expenses of doctoral students and ensure that at least 10% of the total amount of doctoral grants obtained by the university through institutional contracts and of tuition fees collected from the doctoral students enrolled in the paid tuition system is used for this purpose</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
5.	PI	<b>A.2.1.1</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>As a suggestion for further improvement – the Research Centre could expand its activities, involve international researchers and experts from the other fields in order to grow as interdisciplinary and crossborder Research Center creating new opportunities for doctoral students.</i>
6.	PI	<b>A.3.1.1</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It is recommended to introduce annual trainings for PhD Supervisors to support their professional development and provide them with the opportunities to update/improve their teaching and supervision-related skills. For instance, a series of short courses or training courses such as “Heutagogy and Cybergogy in Supervision Process”, “Supporting PhD Students Online”, “Effective Formative Feedback”, “Cross-Cultural Supervision” etc.</i>
7.	PI*	<b>A.3.1.2</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>The IBE Doctoral School, its students and supervisors would benefit if some foreign supervisors are employed at IBE doctoral domain.</i>
8.	PI	<b>A.3.1.3</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>In addition to continuous professional development in the study field it is recommended to update and improve teaching skills through relevant trainings on the constant basis. For instance, “Social Media tools in modern teaching”, “Motivate your students effectively”, “PhD class management”, “Andragogy: How to teach adults in efficient way”, “Conflict Resolution”, “Integrated and contextualized learning”, “Problem-based and project-based learning” etc.</i>
9.	PI	<b>A.3.2.1</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It is recommended to expand international presence of IBE PhD supervisors in such areas as membership on boards of international professional associations and participation in expert groups working abroad, membership on doctoral defense commissions at universities abroad or co-leading with universities abroad.</i>
10.	PI	<b>B.1.2.2</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It is suggested to analyze the reasons for dropout rate fluctuations and develop students’ retention policy. Potentially it could be done through Student Support Office/Service.</i>
11.	PI	<b>B.2.1.1</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It is recommended to introduce a separate course on statistical data processing and some other in-depth research methodology courses as electives or training units. The syllabuses of the existing courses could be updated and based on the more recently published peer-</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
				<i>reviewed articles, up-to-date academic literature presenting the modern advanced research in the field of international business and economics. It is also important to encourage students to use international publications and research papers in English.</i>
12.	PI	<b>B.2.1.2</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It is recommended to introduce a separate course devoted to intellectual property in scientific research, its characteristics, the legal and social means developed to encourage and control it, types of intellectual property, violation of intellectual property, copyright, patent and trademark regimes, licensing and trade secrets. Alternatively the course "Ethics and Academic Integrity" could be revised and improved in order to cover these themes.</i>
13.	PI	<b>B.2.1.3</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It is suggested to introduce some skill units and/or elective courses allowing students to get additional advanced competencies related to scientific research training at PhD level. For instance, "The Reflective Practitioner", "Action Research", "Communicating Your Research", "Leadership: Doctoral Theory and Practice", "Research Fundraising", "How to Publish in International Peer-reviewed Journals" etc.</i>
14.	PI*	<b>B.3.1.2</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It is recommended to extend geography of conferences attended with Asian and American events.</i>
15.	PI*	<b>B.3.2.1</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It would be reasonable to engage foreign researchers to make the research results of the EAI doctoral domain even more visible internationally and to widely disseminate its research outcomes abroad.</i>
16.	PI	<b>C.1.1.1</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It is recommended to diversify the types of surveys conducted and develop programme-related questionnaire for employers and graduates to collect their specific feedback in order to consider it for the programme improvement.</i>
17.	PI*	<b>C.1.1.2</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It is recommended to improve approach to student satisfaction surveys. The suggestion is to conduct students surveys after each particular course before marking (ensuring full anonymity) as well as ask for feedback through general surveys after the defence of the PhD dissertation and a result of the study program completion. The outcomes of the survey should be discussed at all levels (by the supervisors, departments, EAI Council, IOSUD, ASE) in order to better understand student's needs not only directly related to the research process, but also their psychological, financial, social, logistics, infrastructure, and other needs as well as their feedback on different services provided by ASE. It is also</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
				<i>important to inform the students how their feedback was considered and actioned by the Doctoral School.</i>
18.	PI	<b>C.2.1.1</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It is recommended to improve web-site in English ad ensure that all information related to the study process, all documents and regulations are available in English.</i>
19.	PI	<b>C.2.2.2</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It is recommended to ensure that all students' papers (articles, assignments, drafted chapters of the dissertation, etc.) can be checked for similarity multiple times for free.</i>
20.	PI	<b>C.3.1.3</b>	Indicator is fulfilled	<i>It is recommended to engage graduates to promote the EAI abroad. Another suggestion is that foreign experts could be widely enaged into the doctoral and advisory committees.</i>

*The recommendations contained in the report shall be resumed in the indicators' analysis. Other general recommendations may be made that do not fit within a particular indicator.*

*VERY IMPORTANT!!! – Each identified weakness must be correlated with at least one recommendation to improve the situation!*

## **VI. Conclusions and general recommendations**

*Several important issues raised during the evaluation are resumed and some general conclusions are drawn on the quality of the education provided within the doctoral study domain under review; the Experts' Panel also presents general assessments about the institution. Other general recommendation may also be presented, which cannot be related to a specific indicator and have not been presnted at point V.*

*A decision is proposed, together with the reasons for granting it (if the Experts' Panel members do not reach a consensus, each of them can propose and argue his/her own decision).*

*As a result of the EAI doctoral domain evaluation the experts' panel has agreed that it meets major performance indicators and standards except PI A.1.3.3 which is partially fulfilled. The relevant explanations and recommendations are provided above.*

*In addition to the recommendations on each specific performance indicator there are some other suggestions for further improvement:*

*It is recommended to strengthen collaboration with employers and graduates in terms of their further engagement into the Doctoral domain quality assurance and improvement processes (for instance, it would be useful to collect their feedback on the study programme and courses design, to develop action plan on its basis, to have joint supervision by professor and business/industry representative, to use graduates for Doctoral School promotion within the country and overseas, to work with graduates and employers for research grants, scholarships etc.).*



It is also suggested to strengthen publicity and international promotion of the EAI Doctoral School using marketing techniques and technologies, potential of the graduates networking etc.

In order to develop internationalization strategy further it is reasonable to develop action plan how to increase number of international students to achieve at least level of 2015-2016 (45 students), to engage foreign professors to joint supervisios and teaching on the constant basis. At institutional level it could be also recommended to consider the Rome Communique 2020 statements and to reflect it in the Doctoral School's and University's strategies - namely to ensure the University's role as "a key actor in meeting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030"; to bring its "educational, research and innovation capacities to bear on the fundamental global objectives"; to prepare learners of all study cycles for new "green" jobs and to become active, critical and responsible citizens. This could be done, not only via relevant research topics, but also via the courses content, methods applied, university sustainable development and "green" policy, the University's Sustainable Development Goals Reports on the annual basis etc.

It would be also useful to have Student Support centre/service for PhD students to provide maintaiance to studnents when they face any issues mentioned in the Code of Doctoral Studies, to inform and explain them the procedures of wirhdrawal and interruption of the study, the consiquenses of academic integrity breach, the procedure of change of the PhD supervisor, the approach to the conflict mediation, and to support students in many other issues. Such Student Support centre could develop and implement students retention policy, provide psychological, consultative, informational and other support.

Another suggestion which could be beneficial at ASE level - to introduce Training Centre or Training services to support students and supervisors with the professional development opportunities. Some students may need additional training on developing such skills as critical thinking, academic writing, preparing studies to be published in peer-reviewed journals, fundraising for research activities, advanced qualitative/quantitative methods, primary data collection etc. This could be done either via elective courses or via skill units development and promoting. Students could benefit from such optional training courses as "The Reflective Pratitioner", "Action Research", "Communicating Your Research", "Leadership: Doctoral Theory and Practice", "Research Fundrising", "How to Publish in International Peer-reviewed Journals". Continuous professional development of supervisors should also include improving and updating their specific teaching and supervision related skills (for instance, a series of short courses or training courses "Heutagogy and Cybergogy", "Supporting Students Online", "Effective Formative Feedback", "Cross-Cultural Supervision", "Social Media tools in modern teaching", "Motivate your students effectively", "PhD class management", "Andragogy: How to teach adults in efficient way", "Conflict Resolution", "Integrated and contextualized learning", "Problem-based and project-based learning").





## VII. Annexes

*The following types of documents shall be attached:*

- *The detailed schedule of the evaluation visit – MANDATORY.*
- *The survey questionnaire applied to doctoral students or academic staff in the doctoral study domain under review, the results - optional (e.g., in graphic form) and their interpretation - if applicable.*
- *Scanned documents – any document requested from the IOSUD during the evaluation visit and received, which is not found in the internal evaluation file received before the visit and referred to in the report.*
- *Pictures – if relevant issues are raised regarding the condition of the student residences, cafeterias, premises for teaching and learning activities, library etc.*
- *Screenshots/Print screens of the Doctoral School/IOSUD website proving specific claims in the report, accompanied by the date when they were accessed and saved.*
- *Any other documents relevant to the evaluation process referred to in the report.*