

The External Evaluation Report of a Doctoral Study Domain

Contents

I. Introduction

II. Methods used

III. Analysis of performance indicators

IV. SWOT Analysis

V. Overview of judgments awarded and of the recommendations

VI. Conclusions and general recommendations

VII. Annexes

I. Introduction¹

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.).

II. Methods used

This chapter will contain the methods and tools used in the external evaluation process, before and during the evaluation visit, including at least:

- The analysis of the internal evaluation report of the doctoral study domain under review and its Annexes;
 - The analysis of documents made available by the IOSUD, in physical format, during the evaluation visit (if such documents have been requested);
 - The analysis of documents, data and information available on the IOSUD/Doctoral School(s) website, in electronic format;
 - Visiting 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;

¹ Each time when applicable the information shall be presented gender-wise.



- the student residences;
- the student cafeteria;
- sports ground etc.;
- Meeting/discussions with doctoral students in the doctoral study domain under review;
- Meeting/Discussions with the graduates of the doctoral study domain under review;
- Meeting/Discussions with employers of the graduates in the doctoral study domain under review;
- Meeting/Discussions with the school officials of the Doctoral School(s) in which the doctoral study domain under review is operating;
- Meeting/Discussions with the doctoral advisors in the doctoral study domain under review;
- Meeting/discussions with the representatives of the various structures of the IOSUD/Doctoral School(s) in which the doctoral study domain under review 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);
 - the Career Counselling and Guidance Center;
 - student organizations;
 - secretariats;
 - various departments/administrative offices (Social/Student residences-Cafeterias etc.);
- Application of questionnaires to doctoral students or academic staff in the doctoral study domain under review.

III. Analysis of ARACIS's performance indicators

Domain A. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

**general description of domain analysis.*

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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

The University has submitted electronic copies of the abovementioned documents including Regulation for the organization and conduct of admission to doctoral studies, Regulation to organize and carry out the admission to doctoral studies (for last 6 academic years), Election methodology, Decision for election of Director of Doctoral School of law, information of meetings held, study contract for doctoral students.

The documents have been submitted in official language (Romanian) and generally demonstrate existence of relevant procedures for efficient fulfillment. Any concrete details on specifics should be addressed by native speakers – members of the domain committee.

The Management structure is appropriate and composed of Director and SDD Council. Additionally, proof of election and participation of students has been provided by the University.

Recommendations: N/A

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 University has provided convincing arguments and supporting documents on the existence of indicated standards in Art. 17, p. 5, including procedures for acceptance of new PhD supervisors, mechanisms based on which the opportunity, structure and content of the training programme based on advanced studies are decided on, procedures for change of doctoral supervisor and conflict mediation etc. These issues have been addressed in the Regulation of SDD.

The documents have been submitted in official language (Romanian) and generally demonstrate existence of relevant procedures for efficient fulfillment. Any concrete details on specifics should be addressed by native speakers – members of the domain committee.



Recommendations:

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.*

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

The University has provided convincing arguments that an appropriate IT system is in place to keep track of doctoral students. The system has been utilized for student admission, allocation in on-site campus accommodation, scientific research management, student records, academic records, grade transcripts, scholarships, and intra-community mobility etc.

A letter with description of the system prepared by the IT Department has been attached to the report.

Recommendations: Further efforts should be made to update the IT system for the purpose of tracking graduates' employability if in accordance to national and University regulation/s.

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 existence and use of an appropriate software program has been well substantiated. The University has provided adequate evidence on the utilization of the selected system for plagiarism check (www.sistemantiplagiat.ro). Additionally, the University has provided relevant documents on general presentation of plagiarism software. The procedure applies to all doctoral theses, books and articles supported by/published at ASE. For all 12 PhD students who defended their theses during 1 October 2016 – September 2020, 100% were approved.

Recommendations: N/A

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.*

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

The University has demonstrated commitment to improve this performance indicator. During the interview sessions the management of the School has declared its willingness to work on International joint doctoral programs, participation of foreign professors in defence committees, development of doctoral projects etc. The School is currently working on setting – up of a new research center for comparative law including arbitration. However, it should be emphasized during the evaluation period, no research projects attracted by PhD supervisors were carried out, especially due to their relatively small number.

Recommendations: The University should develop a longterm plan for boosting research activities (projects) in the field of law. It should take into account the prospects for receiving national and/or international funding including the opportunities available through the EU. Additionally, the prospects for establishment of research projects with other Romanian law schools or law schools in the region should be taken in consideration. Research/institutional/human resources grants could be also generated through a collaboration with local/national/regional authorities or the civil society.

The indicator is partially 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

According to the information submitted by the University, only 2 PhD students out of 30 benefited from other sources of funding, through the POCU Programme. As a result of that, this requirement has only partially been met.

Recommendations: Having in mind the increase of the funding for Erasmus+ program, the doctoral students should be encouraged to apply for the mobilities through on-time and comprehensive information prepared by the university and diverse list of signed agreements for mobility to other relevant universities.

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

Performance Indicator *A.1.3.3.² *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

The University has provided information that out of the income, for the doctoral students of SDD in the field of Law, the expenses related to the participation in conferences below the level of 10% per year were reimbursed. As a result of that, this indicator has been partially met.

Recommendations: The University should develop a plan to address the allocation of at least 10% of the total amount of doctoral grants for reimbursement of professional training expenses of doctoral students.

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

Criterion A.2. Research infrastructure

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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.*

² 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.



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 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*

The University has provided relevant information on the venues and the material equipment available to the doctoral school of law including lecture and seminars rooms, general information on computer equipment, information on available software. List of detailed equipment has been attached to the self-evaluation report.

More information has been elaborated under c.2.1.1.

Recommendations: N/A

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion A.3. Quality of Human Resources

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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.*

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 University has submitted adequate information on the fulfillment of performance indicator A.3.1.1. All six doctoral supervisors affiliated to ASE meet the CNATDCU minimum standards in force. The university has submitted a detailed list of indicators that the minimum standards are met.



Recommendations: The School should address the limited number of doctoral advisors tenured at the institution and encourage other teaching staff to fulfill the criteria.

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

The performance indicators A3.1.2. has also been fulfilled. The University has provided information that 3 out of 6 doctoral advisors have been employed based on tenure contract.

Recommendations: Given the fact that this indicator has been fulfilled to the bare minimum (50%), the University should consider employing new staff for the purpose of development of doctoral studies.

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 University has provided valid and relevant information on the study subjects and information regarding teaching staff at their expertise. A list of all advisors and their concrete field/s of expertise has been attached in separate annex accompanied by CV of doctoral advisors.

However, it is evident that the teaching staff dominantly has academic background and expertise in the field of economics, marketing, philology etc. The number of teaching staff trained in the field of law is very limited.

Recommendations: The involvement of academic staff with stronger background in the field of law is of paramount importance for the development of the doctoral studies of law. The University should address this issue as soon as possible.

The indicator is partially 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 programs³ 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*

According the documentation submitted by the University, the doctoral advisors coordinate in average 2 doctoral students. As a result of that, the percentage of doctoral thesis advisors who concomitantly coordinate more than 8 doctoral students, but no more than 12 is 0%. Consequently, this performance indicators has been completely fulfilled.

Recommendations: N/A

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.*

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 aforementioned 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*

³ 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.



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

The University has provided extensive information on the fulfillment of performance indicator A.3.2.1. The supporting documentation on the fulfillment of this criteria has included separate overview for each doctoral supervisor in respect to his/her international visibility including participation in conferences, publications etc.

The elaboration has been well substantiated and as a result of that, the indicator is fulfilled.

Recommendations: N/A

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

As it was indicated in the documentation submitted by the University, all 6 doctoral supervisors continue to be scientifically active, obtaining at least 25% of the score required by the CNATDCU minimum standards in force at the time of the evaluation, based on their scientific results within the past five years. ASE has submitted relevant information on the performances of the doctoral supervisors

Recommendations: N/A

The indicator is fulfilled.

Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

**general description of domain analysis.*

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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.*



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

The School has provided information that a significant share in the total candidates to admission for doctoral studies goes to candidates coming from master programmes organized by other universities.

No additional information has been presented on the issue.

A request for clarification has been submitted yet no additional information has been presented by the university.

As a result of that, it is evident that the requirements are partially met.

Recommendations: The School should maintain a database with statistical information regarding performance indicator B.1.1.1. per academic year.

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

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

**general description of the standard analysis.*

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

Criteria for admission to doctoral program have been included in University regulations.

Recommendations: N/A

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 admission⁴ 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*

The University has provided informaton that the drop out rate of the students at the doctoral school is 0%. As a result of that, the performance indicator has been fulfilled.

Recommendations: N/A

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion B.2. The content of doctoral programs

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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.*

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 University has submitted the curriculum of study as well as the syllabi of courses. The selection of the courses is appropriate and includes courses that are specific and probably have not been taught at BA or MA level. The program includes a course on research methods and a course on ethics and academic integrity which in accordance to national requirements.

The cumpolsory readings for the courses (Comparative law of international arbitration and additional courses) have been generally well thought through and include both Romanian and relevant international readings. The diverse readings for the courses brings an evident added value to the doctoral program and strengthens the knowledge and skills of the students.

This was not the case with the course Institutions of Criminal law which include basic readings more appropriate for lower cycle of studies.

⁴ 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.

Recommendations: More diverse readings including recent academic papers as well as publications in foreign languages should be included in the syllabi in particular for the course Institutions of Criminal law.

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

The curriculum has included the course "Academic ethics and integrity" which is a specific subject dedicated to ethics in scientific research and intellectual property, as required by law.

Recommendations:

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 activities⁵.*

- 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 specific professional and transversal competences are highlighted in the competence grids and the syllabi included in the annual curricula of the Doctoral School of Law. This is adequate and aligned with the contemporary trends in the European area of Higher Education. The specific professional and transversal competences have been submitted in a separate documents. Additionally, the University has submitted the general learning outcomes which are very broadly defined and not aligned with the targeted field – law.

On request for clarifications the University has provided the general learning outcomes and they are adequate.

Recommendations: N/A

⁵ 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.



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 University has submitted relevant information regarding the organization of counselling/guidance from functional guidance commissions including doctoral schedules and meetings.

However, more should have been said in respect to the content of these meetings, the results in terms of impact on doctoral students' career. Additionally, this element should also have been included in the evaluation questionnaire.

Recommendations: The Doctoral school should maintain an operational mechanism to monitor the quality and relevance of the counselling/guidance sessions for doctoral students.

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 information submitted by the University, the ratio between the number of doctoral students and the number of teaching staff/researchers providing doctoral guidance is 2,33. There are 6 faculty members/researchers and 13 doctoral students.

Recommendations: N/A

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.*



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 University has submitted a list of publications of graduates and current doctoral students. Having in mind the fact that these publications are dominantly in Romanian language, the issue will be addressed by the national expert.

Recommendations: Apart from the importance for publishing and making presentations at national conferences, a more substantive involvement of doctoral students at academic/scientific events abroad would have brought an added value to the School.

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

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

The University has submitted a list of 28 presentation/published academic work of doctoral students in the last 5 years with a ratio of 2,33. The presentations/articles have been published dominantly in Romanian and in English language. However, the number of presentations/articles for 2019 and 2020 remains low.

Recommendations: The Doctoral School and the University should more actively promote participation of doctoral students on conferences and other academic events abroad. Additionally, the School should monitor the trend of lower number of publications in 2019 and 2020.

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.



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

The University has provided convincing arguments regarding the involvement of external specialists in the doctoral program. In that direction, a list of 12 external specialists has been included in the documentation. All external specialists are affiliated to Romanian HEIs and are mainly involved as members of committees for defence of the doctoral theses.

Recommendations: Further efforts should be made to involve international specialists or national specialists affiliated with foreign academic institutions including Romanian academic diaspora in the doctoral program.

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

The University has provided a list of scientific specialists coming from a higher education institution, other than the institution where the defense on the doctoral thesis is organized and their ratio in respect to performance indicator B.3.2.2. According to the University, the maximum ratio between the number of doctoral theses allocated to a particular scientific referee coming from another higher education institution than IOSUD-ASE and the number of doctoral theses presented during the reported period in the SDD is lower than 0,3 for this period.

On the basis of the submitted information, the performance indicator is fulfilled.

Recommendations: N/A

The indicator is fulfilled.

Domain C. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

**general description of domain analysis.*



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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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.*

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 University has submitted a document that addresses following issues: scientific activity of the PhD supervisors, the infrastructure and logistics necessary to carry out research, 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

However more information and details are required to demonstrate that the system is operational. For instance, minutes of meetings and or discussions regarding the results of the evaluations.

Recommendations: The School should strengthen its capacity to efficiently analyze and address results from evaluation questionnaires and to implement possible conclusions/recommendations.

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 main mechanism for obtaining feedback from doctoral students represents the online evaluation questionnaire which is regularly conducted.

The questionnaire is appropriate, well – structured and has the potential to offer concrete directions for improvement of the process.

Additionally, the School prepares an action plan to improve deficiencies pointed out and stimulate scientific and academic performance of the Doctoral School Law

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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.*

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 University has provided a document with links to the abovementioned categories. All foreseen categories are included and the stated links are operational except for the links to curricula content.

Recommendations: N/A



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.*

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

The University has provided doctoral students of law with access to relevant databases for their field of work. A list of available library databases has been submitted and is appropriate. Additionally, the access to other related research facilities has been adequately explained.

Recommendations: N/A

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

The University has submitted information that each doctoral student has access to an electronic system for verifying the degree of similarity with other existing scientific or artistic works (<http://dmci.ase.ro/index.php/antiplagiat>).

Recommendations: N/A

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

The University has submitted information that all doctoral students have access to scientific research laboratories or other facilities depending on the specific domain/domains within the Doctoral School.



Recommendations: N/A

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion C.3. Internationalization

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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.*

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

The University has adopted an Internationalization Strategy. ASE signed mobility agreements with foreign universities, aiming at the mobility of teachers and researchers, as well as research mobility for PhD students. ASE has concluded a partnership agreement with the Romanian-US Fulbright Commission in order to develop a joint grant program for American professors / researchers to teach / research at ASE. Internationalization aims at, at Doctoral School Law to conclude Erasmus agreements, respectively bilateral agreements for the mobility of PhD students, but also for researchers. Concrete list/s of doctoral students who have utilized these opportunities have not been submitted which represents an evident imperfection in the work of the school.

Recommendations: The issue of internationalization represents a clear challenge for the university. Several steps could be carried out in order to boost internationalization including: utilization of personal network of contacts to encourage agreements with new universities, promote cooperation with universities in the region, attract Romanian diaspora working at HEIs abroad to participate in committee for defense of theses, encourage and promote student participation at conferences abroad, apply for international funding and grants with existing and new partners, establish cooperation with civil society organizations for purpose of research and internationalization, promote mobility to the University etc. Additionally, the School should maintain a database with information of students who have participated in international mobilities/events/program which could be very useful to attract new students and boost internationalization of the doctoral program.

The indicator is partially 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

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

The Doctoral School of law has not provided information on organization of international co-tutelage.

On the other hand, the university has included an impressive list of international expert who have delivered courses/lectures to doctoral students. The University has submitted a detailes list of all lectures and their topics. However, the lectures were dominantly in the field of business and economy, rather than law.

Recommendations: The School should promote the international co-tutelage to doctoral students and initiate involvement of foreign professors in joint committees. An emphasis in organization ov visiting lecturers at ASE should be also put on invitations for experts/professors in the field of law.

The indicator is partially 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 University has provided information on participation on international promotional fairs in the last 5 years mainly in the field of economy/business.

The number of international students remains low.

Recommendations: The School should develop a plan for improvement of its internationalizations with realistic indicators for attractinng international doctoral students and boosting involvement of foreign professors in its work. The potential of Romanian scholarship program and Erasmus+ should be more actively promoted. Additionally, the emphasis of the promotion of the doctoral program could also be put on the region of South East Europe.

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

IV. SWOT Analysis

<u>Strengths:</u>	<u>Weaknesses:</u>
(1) long tradition of teaching; (2) developed procedures for organization of doctoral studies; (3) appropriate research infrastructure and facilities for doctoral studies and (4) the university is based in national capital which increases opportunities for collaboration.	(1) internationalization of the university; (2) strengthening of the tools for evaluation of doctoral program in law; (3) funding for international mobility of students and (4) capacities of the unit in charge of the preparation of self-evaluation report.
<u>Opportunities:</u>	<u>Threats:</u>
(1) strengthening cooperation with other leading Romanian universities for the purpose of joint activities, teaching, doctoral advisors, project applications; (2) utilization of the location of the university to establish or improve cooperation with national authorities in the field of law, economic and other professional chambers in the capital; (3) utilization of the success achieved on university level at ASE in the field of business and economy and boosting synergies between law and economy; (4) focus on applications for international funding and potentials for cooperation with civil society organization for funding purposes.	(1) low number of doctoral advisors in law; (2) lack of research projects and sustainable international cooperation; (3) low number of international students and (4) available funding for doctoral studies (scholarship, external sources).

Overview of judgments awarded and of the recommendations

No.	Type of indicator (*, C)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
1.	A	1.1.1.	Fulfilled	
2.	A	1.1.2.	Fulfilled	
3.	A	1.2.1.	Fulfilled	
4.	A	1.2.2.	Fulfilled	
5.	A	1.3.1.	Partially fulfilled	The University should develop a longterm plan for boosting research activities (projects) in the field of law. It should take into account the prospects for receiving national and/or international funding including the the opportunities available through the EU. Additionally, the prospects for establishment of research projects with other Romanian law schools or law schools in the region should be taken in consideration.

				Research/institutional/human resources grants could be also generated through a collaboration with local/national/regional authorities or the civil society.
6.	A	1.3.2.	Partially fulfilled	Having in mind the increase of the funding for Erasmus+ program, the doctoral students should be encouraged to apply for the mobilities through on-time and comprehensive information prepared by the university and diverse list of signed agreements for mobility to other relevant universities.
7.	A	1.3.3.	Partially fulfilled	The University should develop a plan to address the allocation of at least 10% of the total amount of doctoral grants for reimbursement of professional training expenses of doctoral students.
8.	A	2.1.1.	Fulfilled	
9.	A	3.1.1.	Fulfilled	The School should address the limited number of doctoral advisors tenured at the institution and encourage other teaching staff to fulfill the criteria.
10.	A	3.1.2.	Fulfilled	Given the fact that this indicator has been fulfilled to the bare minimum (50%), the University should consider employing new staff for the purpose of development of doctoral studies.
11.	A	3.1.3.	Partially fulfilled	The involvement of academic staff with stronger background in the field of law is of paramount importance for the development of the doctoral studies of law. The University should address this issue as soon as possible.
12.	A	3.1.4.	Fulfilled	
13.	A	3.2.1.	Fulfilled	
14.	A	3.2.2.	Fulfilled	
15.	B	1.1.1.	Partially fulfilled	The School should maintain a database with statistical information regarding performance indicator B.1.1.1. per academic year.
16.	B	1.2.1.	Fulfilled	
17.	B	1.2.2.	Fulfilled	
18.	B	2.1.1.	Fulfilled	More diverse readings including recent academic papers as well as publications in foreign languages should be included in the syllabi in particular for the course Institutions of Criminal law.
19.	B	2.1.2.	Fulfilled	
20.	B	2.1.3.	Fulfilled	
21.	B	2.1.4.	Fulfilled	
22.	B	3.1.1.	Fulfilled	Apart from the importance for publishing and making presentations at national conferences, a more substantive involvement of doctoral students at academic/scientific events abroad would have brought an added value to the School.
23.	B	3.1.2.	Fulfilled	The Doctoral School and the University should more actively promote participation of doctoral students on conferences and other academic events abroad. Additionally, the School should monitor the trend of lower number of publications in 2019 and 2020.
24.	B	3.2.1.	Fulfilled	Further efforts should be made to involve international specialists or national specialists affiliated with foreign academic institutions including Romanian academic diaspora in the doctoral program.
25.	B	3.2.2.	Fulfilled	

26.	C	1.1.1.	Fulfilled	The School should strengthen its capacity to efficiently analyze and address results from evaluation questionnaires and to implement possible conclusions/recommendations.
27.	C	1.1.2.	Fulfilled	
28.	C	2.1.1.	Fulfilled	
29.	C	2.2.1.	Fulfilled	
30.	C	2.2.2.	Fulfilled	
31.	C	2.2.3.	Fulfilled	
32.	C	3.1.1.	Partially fulfilled	The issue of internationalization represents a clear challenge for the university. Several steps could be carried out in order to boost internationalization including: utilization of personal network of contacts to encourage agreements with new universities, promote cooperation with universities in the region, attract Romanian diaspora working at HEIs abroad to participate in committee for defense of theses, encourage and promote student participation at conferences abroad, apply for international funding and grants with existing and new partners, establish cooperation with civil society organizations for purpose of research and internationalization, promote mobility to the University etc. Additionally, the School should maintain a database with information of students who have participated in international mobilities/events/program which could be very useful to attract new students and boost internationalization of the doctoral program.
33.	C	3.1.2.	Partially fulfilled	The School should promote the international co-tutelage to doctoral students and initiate involvement of foreign professors in joint committees. An emphasis in organization of visiting lecturers at ASE should be also put on invitations for experts/professors in the field of law.
34.	C	3.1.3.	Partially fulfilled	The School should develop a plan for improvement of its internationalizations with realistic indicators for attracting international doctoral students and boosting involvement of foreign professors in its work. The potential of Romanian scholarship program and Erasmus+ should be more actively promoted. Additionally, the emphasis of the promotion of the doctoral program could also be put on the region of South East Europe.

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 presented 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).

The University should develop a longterm plan for boosting research activities (projects) in the field of law. It should take into account the prospects for receiving national and/or international funding including the opportunities available through the EU. Additionally, the prospects for establishment of research projects with other Romanian law schools or law schools in the region should be taken in consideration. Research/institutional/human resources grants could be also generated through a collaboration with local/national/regional authorities or the civil society.

The University should develop a plan to address the allocation of at least 10% of the total amount of doctoral grants for reimbursement of professional training expenses of doctoral students.

The School should address the limited number of doctoral advisors tenured at the institution and encourage other teaching staff to fulfill the criteria. The involvement of academic staff with stronger background in the field of law is of paramount importance for the development of the doctoral studies of law. The University should address this issue as soon as possible. Moreover, the capacities of the unit in charge of the preparation of self-evaluation report should be improved.

The School should maintain a database with statistical information regarding performance indicator B.1.1.1. per academic year.

More diverse readings including recent academic papers as well as publications in foreign languages should be included in the syllabi in particular for the course Institutions of Criminal law.

Further efforts should be made to involve international specialists or national specialists affiliated with foreign academic institutions including Romanian academic diaspora in the doctoral program.

The School should strengthen its capacity to efficiently analyze and address results from evaluation questionnaires and to implement possible conclusions/recommendations.

The issue of internationalization represents a clear challenge for the university. Several steps could be carried out in order to boost internationalization including: utilization of personal network of contacts to encourage agreements with new universities, promote cooperation with universities in the region, attract Romanian diaspora working at HEIs abroad to participate in committee for defense of theses, encourage and promote student participation at conferences abroad, apply for international funding and grants with existing and new partners, establish cooperation with civil society organizations for purpose of research and internationalization, promote mobility to the University etc. Besides that, the School should maintain a database with information of students who have participated in international mobilities/events/program which could be very useful to attract new students and boost internationalization of the doctoral program.

The School should promote the international co-tutelage to doctoral students and initiate involvement of foreign professors in joint committees. An emphasis in organization of visiting lecturers at ASE should be also put on invitations for experts/professors in the field of law.

The School should develop a plan for improvement of its internationalizations with realistic indicators for attracting international doctoral students and boosting involvement of foreign professors in



its work. The potentials of Romanian scholarship program and Erasmus+ should be more actively promoted. Finally, the emphasis of the promotion of the doctoral program could also be put on the region of South East Europe.

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.*