

The External Evaluation Report of a Doctoral Study Domain

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I. Introduction¹

University of Bucharest asked for a periodic external evaluation of their doctoral studies/schools in the Field of Psychology. The Psychology domain is managed by Doctoral school in Psychology and Educational Science, while in the case of interdisciplinary doctoral dissertation by the Interdisciplinary School of Doctoral Studies, established in 2018 at the University of Bucharest. The Doctoral school is organised and carried out within the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences. Doctoral School that are undergoing process of evaluation has a mission to train researchers in two scientific branches and to contribute to advanced scientific research, as stated in the self-evaluation report.

Doctoral Schools was presented by the School director, while the members of the evaluation panel were:

1. Prof. Alin Gavreliuc, PhD, Coordinator
2. Prof. Melita Kovacevic, PhD, International Expert
3. Flavia-Elena Ciurbea, doctoral candidate

The external evaluation process was accomplished in hybrid mode by combining face-to-face site-visit and online sessions in the period of November 22 to 26, 2021.

II. Methods used

The evaluation process has been performed following the common format of the external evaluations, well supported by the ARACIS, by the University, and by the Field of Psychology, in particular by the director of a doctoral school, as well as by all the submitted documents, regulations, guidelines, the doctoral school report and all the relevant annexes.

The face-to-face visit to the Faculty (classrooms, research centres with constitutive laboratories, library) was organised for, and accomplish by the Romanian panel members (the Coordinator).

1.



The evaluation process was conducted in line with Guidelines regarding the activities carried out during the on-site visit by the Experts' Panel to evaluate a Doctoral Study Domain (ARACIS), and the List of the domains, criteria, standards, performance indicators, and List of critical performance indicators for the periodical external evaluation of Doctoral Study Domains (ARACIS).

III. Analysis of ARACIS's performance indicators

Domain A. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

The Doctoral school is situated within the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences which is taking care of different aspects of capacity, spatial condition, research infrastructure, funding.

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

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.

Performance Indicator A.1.1.1.

This performance indicator shows that the School has in place all the general mechanisms and procedures that assure well functioning. There is a subsidiarity of the relevant documents and it is clear which bodies are decision making structures. There are clear regulations with a distribution of roles and responsibilities. Each level of institutional structures from the Senate to the Council of the Doctoral School participates in the process of both management and quality.

From the external perspective (international expert view) it seems that in general the system is overprescribed, and that too much focus is given on meeting various regulated criteria. At the same time, it might be that this does not have necessarily a positive impact on overall quality. Form could receive more attention than content itself. However this is not the case in particular of Psychology domain at the University of Bucharest, but it is a feature of overall national system.

The Council of Doctoral School is a body that, although, follows all the regulations, has partially unclear roles being at the same time decision making body and advisory body. It seems that it has too broad scope of responsibilities, and according to the collected information during the interviews, it has its sessions sometimes too frequently and with long hours. This does not necessarily contribute to efficiency and effectiveness. This is even more true considering the fact that some members are coming from different institutions, even towns. In addition, and again although it is aligned with the relevant regulations, the Doctoral school director also serves as the president/chair of the Council. It puts him/her in a position to wear different hats and, actually, it leads in some situations to a conflict of interest.

Recommendations: To reconsider an issue of the overregulated system together with other stakeholders and institutional governing bodies; to reconsider the



role and responsibility of the Council of Doctoral School in order to increase its effectiveness and efficiency.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator A.1.1.2.

All the mandatory criteria, procedures and standards, established in the scope of the doctoral school regulations, are applied to all the issues regarding doctoral supervisors, the training programme, obligations of doctoral candidates and prevention of fraud, including plagiarism.

It has to be noted that although the above criteria is met, it is still impression that plagiarism is the main aspect of misconduct in research, while other forms are not sufficiently emphasized, as well as research integrity is very modestly articulated.

Recommendations:

More elaborated and continuous approach to ethics in research and research integrity needs to be present in the process of doctoral education (in addition to existing short courses offered to all doctoral students on the university level).

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

Performance Indicator A.1.2.1.

The IT system is present, adequate, maintained and supports different tasks at the University and faculty level as well as it supports different stakeholders in the process.

Recommendations: none

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator A.1.2.2.

The software seems to be appropriate, updates and well fit for the purpose.

Recommendations: none

The indicator is fulfilled.

Standard A.1.3.

The Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences makes sure that financial resources are used optimally, and the revenues obtained from doctoral studies are supplemented through additional funding besides governmental funding.

Performance Indicator A.1.3.1.



Doctoral School and their researchers are active in gaining different grants, applying to different programme schemes and institutional grants. However, it seems that still it would be good to have more international grants, which will not bring only funds, but contribute to internationalisation process and help students to build networks.

Recommendations:

More international grants should be welcome, however this will require more successful international applications to different funding schemes.

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%.

Recommendations: none

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.).*

Recommendations: none

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

Criterion A.2. Research infrastructure

Standard A.2.1.

The IOSUD/Doctoral School has a dedicated facilities with research infrastructure to support the conduct of 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



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.

The University-Faculty and doctoral school have fairly good infrastructure, both spatially and in terms of the available equipment. However, the main concern is focused on a structural organisation (centers vs laboratories) where it not clear at all their organisation, structure, differences etc. There are two many small laboratories and from the external perspective it is not clear what is the rational for such distribution of so-called research units. Some of the labs do not have a clear research focus and by saying this, it is questionable what is the rationale to call them 'laboratories' which by definition should be primarily and predominantly focused on research. Again, it seems that such distribution of laboratories, centers are more result of some formal requirements-opportunities and not the actual reflexion of research being performed in all this units.

Recommendations:

It is important to differentiate between education and research infrastructure, It will also contribute to differentiation between education and research in general, which seems too often to be intertwined too much, when speaking of doctoral education.

Revisiting the reasons to have such a high number of individual laboratories and to reconsider the focus-mission. It would be also beneficial for the overall system to make a clear differentiation of centers vs laboratories.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion A.3. Quality of Human Resources

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

However, it seems that so called research units (laboratories, centers) do not have a critical mass of senior researchers, and it might happen that the work is carried out predominantly by doctoral candidates (and master) So, again, although the criterium for the indicator is met, it has to be noticed that there are some weak points in the overall human capacity. This might have a negative impact on quality in the long run, regardless the formal requirements.

Recommendations:

To revisit the criteria for running the Lab, in particuar related to human resources.

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.*

Recommendations: none

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.*

Recommendations: none

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 programs³ does not exceed 20%.*

Although it is still within regulations, international experience shows that we should be very careful what is the optimal number, and certainly overall opinion suggests that it is much less than the regulations (and actual practice) allow. . A proper supervision is a very demanding task, and as such it would be good to bear in mind that 'less is more'. It seems that the whole system lacks some self criticism in terms of optimal number of doctoral candidates per supervisor. It cannot be also compared with the HE systems that are quite different in terms of their structures and constraints (e.g the USA examples). Also, it should not be forgotten that the role of supervisor is much more complex and demanding than just to navigate research itself. All of these observations are not only characteristics noticed at the University of Bucharest but in the whole national system (or at least according to the evaluator's experience).

Referring back to the UB and Domain of Psychology, managing of doctoral school should also assure that the senior staff, being very close to the retirement do not start new supervisions and than in a short time to pass these doctoral candidates to other staff. This is not a proper planning and management of a doctoral school-domain.

Recommendations:

To balance distribution of doctoral candidates among potential supervisors, and to adjust number of doctoral candidates and their research topics to actual overall research-supervisory capacity. Even if regulations do allow certain things, and regardless of the motivation for it, it needs to be treated with caution by those who implement such regulations.

The indicator is fulfilled.



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

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.

Recommendations:

More focus on research (vs. practical-professional work) and richer international collaborations could be beneficial for everyone.

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.

Recommendations: none

The indicator is fulfilled.

Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

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

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.

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.

Recommendations: none

The indicator is fulfilled.

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



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.

According to the self-evaluation report, besides some exams, interviews etc., publications as well as research activities are also taken into account. This is not really a common practice at European universities; although some exceptions might happen, doctoral education is the beginning of research career, and having a publications prior to enrollment should not be really favoured or to be used as an eliminatory criterium.

Recommendations:

To revisit some of the criteria for the enrollment and, possible, to make some analysis of doctoral candidates, their research productivity prior to entering the doctoral school and their later achievements; this kind of analysis could be useful to revisit criteria for accepting someone to become a doctoral candidate.

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%.

Recommendations: none

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion B.2. The content of doctoral programs

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.

Performance Indicator B.2.1.1.

General issue of the system (and again, not only at the UB) is unclear distinction between the domain, programme and school. 'Doctoral school' appears as an artificial title, with no clear roles, responsibilities etc. During the evaluation process the main contact-resource person was the director of a doctoral school, while actually evaluation is focused on the domain. At no point, no one ever defined what is the added value of having a doctoral school versus having a programme.

This situation is, of course, reflected also on some trainings aspect, such as, for example, transferrable skills. Or, when it is discussed research ethics, than the course is offered at the level of the Uni, for all the doctoral candidates. Doctoral school is in a position of a passive observer.



This is an issue of a repetitive nature on the national level, and definitely does not contribute to the modernisation of doctoral system. It is hard not to notice that it seems some changes are done more on 'cosmetic' level, while the essence, the core of the doctoral education did not change accordingly.

Recommendations:

Curriculum should be modernised, some transferrable courses need to be developed and offered as a possibility for doctoral candidates to develop new skills and to prepare for different careers (in particular, not only the academic-research career).

On a national level it would be important to reconsider the roles and responsibilities of different structural solutions (e.g. doctoral school vs doctoral programme), instead of dealing with overlapping concepts (e.g. doctoral school, programme, domain)

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.*

However, although the performance indicator does not require, it is observed that offer of different courses for generic skills and/or transferable skills is very limited and provides very few opportunities to prepare candidates for different career paths. During the interviews it has been also confirmed that students would welcome more preparation for different careers.

The course of Ethics exists, so the criterium is met, however, it would be much better option to have a more interactive course and the course that will be also more focused on research integrity as well.

Recommendations:

In order to prepare better doctoral candidates for different careers (although, still, many PhD holders stay within academia) the Doctoral School should revisit courses that are available and to consider more courses for transferable skills.

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.*

Recommendations: None



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.

Recommendations: None

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.

Recommendations: none

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

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

Performance Indicator B.3.1.1.

The panel selected five papers from the list of provided by the school, and it has been showed that doctoral candidates contribute in a relevant way to the domain under review. They publish in relevant internationally recognised journals.

Recommendations: None

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.*

Recommendations: None

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.

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.*

Recommendations: None



The indicator is partially 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.*

Recommendations: None

The indicator is fulfilled.

Domain C. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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

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.

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.*

Recommendations: None

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.*

Recommendations: none

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

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



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.*

Since, there was no information available in English, for anyone, regardless of his or her role and motivation to check the web site, information cannot be accessed.

Recommendations: None

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.*

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.*

Recommendations: None

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.*

Recommendations: None

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.*

Recommendations: None

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion C.3. Internationalization

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



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.

Recommendations: None

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.

Recommendations: None

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.).

Recommendations: None

The indicator is fulfilled.

IV. SWOT Analysis

<p><u>Strengths:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operating procedures and available mechanisms on all levels - Infrastructure and facilities - Available technical support and logistics for the implementation of doctoral programmes - High level of motivation, both academic-research staff and doctoral candidates - Existing research productivity - A big HE institution recognised internationally 	<p><u>Weaknesses:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No clear concept of doctoral school (vs. programme vs domain) - in some instances too many doctoral candidates per supervisor - Not enough courses that will support different career paths - No requirement and/or offer of supervisor training - Too many small laboratories with no clear criteria for research capacity - No clear distinction btw laboratories and centers - Overemphasized professional work
<p><u>Opportunities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To attract more international students - To develop more clear profile of a doctoral school - to modernise the concept of doctoral education 	<p><u>Threats:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unfavourable economic and politic situation - Employability of graduates - Brain drain of young talents - To loose research focus (vs. professional work)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Being the university in the capital, to try to attract some international researchers as guest professors - To be more successful with international-EU grants - To make stronger links with diverse employers 	
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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	<p>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:</p> <p>a) the internal regulations of the Doctoral School;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>c) the Methodologies for organizing and conducting doctoral studies (for the admission of doctoral students, for the completion of doctoral studies);</p> <p>d) the existence of mechanisms for recognizing the status of a Doctoral advisor and the equivalence of the doctoral degree obtained abroad;</p> <p>e) functional management structures (Council of the doctoral school), giving as well proof of the regularity of meetings;</p>	The indicator is fulfilled.	<i>To reconsider an issue of the overregulated system together with other stakeholders and institutional governing bodies; to reconsider the role and responsibility of the Council of Doctoral School in order to increase its effectiveness and efficiency.</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		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.		
2.	PI	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.	The indicator is fulfilled.	<i>More elaborated and continuous approach to ethics in research and research integrity needs to be present in the process of doctoral education (in addition to existing short courses offered to all doctoral students on the university level).</i>
3.	PI	A.1.2.1. The existence and effectiveness of an appropriate IT system to keep track of doctoral students and their academic background.	The indicator is fulfilled.	None
4.	PI	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.	The indicator is fulfilled.	None
5.	IP	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 indicator is fulfilled.	<i>More international grants should be welcome, however this will require more successful international applications to different funding schemes.</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		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.		
6.	PI *	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%.	<i>The indicator is partially fulfilled.</i>	
7.	PI *	A.1.3.3. 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.).	<i>The indicator is partially fulfilled.</i>	None
8.	CPI	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	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>	<i>It is important to differentiate between education and research infrastructure, It will also contribute to differentiation between education and research in general, which seems too often to be intertwined too much, when speaking of doctoral education.</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		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		<i>Revisiting the reasons to have such a high number of individual laboratories and to reconsider the focus-mission. It would be also beneficial for the overall system to make a clear differentiation of centers vs laboratories.</i>
9.	CPI	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.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>	<i>To revisit the criteria for running the Lab, in particular related to human resources.</i>
10.	PI *	A.3.1.2. At least 50% of all doctoral advisors have a full-time employment contract for an indefinite period with the IOSUD.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>	None
11.	PI	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	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>	None

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		meet the standards established by the institution in relation with the aforementioned teaching and research functions, as provided by the law.		
12.	PI *	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 does not exceed 20%.	The indicator is fulfilled.	<i>To balance distribution of doctoral candidates among potential supervisors, and to adjust number of doctoral candidates and their research topics to actual overall research-supervisory capacity. Even if regulations do allow certain things, and regardless of the motivation for it, it needs to be treated with caution by those who implement such regulations.</i>
13.	CPI	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	The indicator is partially fulfilled.	None

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		<p>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.</p>		
14.	PI *	<p>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</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>	<p>None</p>
15.	PI *	<p>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</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>	<p>None</p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		number of seats funded by the state budget put out through contest within the doctoral studies domain is at least 1,2.		
16.	PI *	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.	The indicator is fulfilled.	<i>To revisit some of the criteria for the enrollment and, possible, to make some analysis of doctoral candidates, their research productivity prior to entering the doctoral school and their later achievements; this kind of analysis could be useful to revisit criteria for accepting someone to become a doctoral candidate.</i>
17.	PI	B.1.2.2. The expelling rate, including renouncement / dropping out of doctoral students 3, respectively 4, years after admission does not exceed 30%.	The indicator is fulfilled.	None
18.	PI	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.	The indicator is fulfilled.	<p><i>Curriculum should be modernised, some transferrable courses need to be developed and offered as a possibility for doctoral candidates to develop new skills and to prepare for different careers (in particular, not only the academic-research career).</i></p> <p><i>On a national level it would be important to reconsider the roles and responsibilities of different structural solutions (e.g. doctoral school vs doctoral programme), instead of dealing with overlapping concepts (e.g. doctoral school, programme, domain)</i></p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
19.	PI	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.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>	<i>In order to prepare better doctoral candidates for different careers (although, still, many PhD holders stay within academia) the Doctoral School should revisit courses that are available and to consider more courses for transferable skills.</i>
20.	PI	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.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>	None
21.	PI	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.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>	None
22.	CPI	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.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>	None

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
23.	CPI	<p>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</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>	<p>None</p>
24.	PI *	<p>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.</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>	<p>None</p>
25.	PI *	<p>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.</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>	<p>None</p>
26.	PI *	<p>B.3.2.2. The ratio between the doctoral theses allocated to one scientific specialist coming from a</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>	<p>None</p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		<p>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.</p>		
27.	PI	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>	None

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
28.	PI *	<p>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.</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>	<p><i>None</i></p>
29.	CPI	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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); 	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>	<p><i>None</i></p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		<p>h) information on the standards for developing the doctoral thesis;</p> <p>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.</p>		
30.	PI	<p>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.</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>	<p>None</p>
31.	PI	<p>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.</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>	<p>None</p>
32.	PI	<p>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.</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>	<p>None</p>
33.	PI *	<p>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</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>	<p>None</p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		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.		
34.	PI	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.	The indicator is fulfilled.	None
35.	PI	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.).	The indicator is fulfilled.	None

VI. Conclusions and general recommendations

Doctoral School in Psychology domain placed at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, University of Bucharest has shown a high level of compliance with most of the given performance indicators, and it is recommended to get a positive evaluation.

The panel members during the site visit, both online and face-to face, had an opportunity to collect all the relevant information from all the stakeholders. The visit has been well prepared, supported with all the relevant documents and openness of all the academic staff, administrative staff, graduates, and last but not least, doctoral candidates. Everyone involved in the process of evaluation showed a high level of motivation and commitment, at the same time opened for constructive critical remarks.



It has been showed that the Doctoral School is well structured and managed, with a sufficient research capacity in terms of people, facilities and infrastructure and funding. Nevertheless, in order to continue further development it would be necessary to revisit some decisions and aspects of functioning, to improve organisational aspects, in particular those related to research units and to enhance internationalisation. It would be important to revisit the rationale for having a doctoral school vs programme (or studies, as also mentioned in some of the submitted documents) and, in general, to modernise some aspects of doctoral education, following the good practice examples of doctoral education in well recognised research universities across Europe.

General remark is that the system is overregulated and this could easily become a constraint for further development. This is observed not only for this university, but as a feature on national level. For future evaluations, and considering the fact that this is the evaluation on a doctoral level, a suggestion would be to conduct the whole evaluation in English. Simultaneous translation does not work always well and definitely has an impact on a communication process. An argument for evaluation in English is also the fact that since this is the doctoral level, and to meet the requirements that the system has, English as a language of science, is known by everyone (as it has been observed during the evaluation process).

In addition, more on a level of form, suggestion is to align the terminology with common European terminology within the system of doctoral education, such as, doctoral candidate (or doctoral researcher), instead of doctoral student; supervisor, instead of coordinator (or advisor; advisor could be used, but than it has different meaning; co-tutelle programmes etc.).

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.*

Melita Kovacevic
Professor PhD

