

## The External Evaluation Report of a Doctoral Study Domain

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

In this chapter, the following shall be summarized:

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

This evaluation was performed as a regular Periodical External Evaluation of the Institution Organising Doctoral Study Programs (IOSUD), respectively of the doctoral study domains (DD) at the „Lucian Blaga“ University of Sibiu. This study visit was performed in a hybrid form, mostly online with an on-site visit of the Panel Coordinator, period July 19th – 23rd 2021. In Doctoral study, domain Management Experts Committee worked as follows: Coordinator Teodora Roman, Universitatea "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" din Iași, International Expert Ivana Bilić, University of Split, and PhD Student Mălăncuș Cezara, Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara.

This evaluation is performed for the Doctoral Programme in Management, performed under the University's Interdisciplinary Doctoral School (SDI) IOSUD – Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu – one of the oldest Romanian universities with a tradition of over 225 years. The doctoral school currently offering 15 (SER) or 14 (official website) different doctoral programs (<https://doctorate.LBUSibiu.ro/en/fields-of-research/>). The doctoral activity is overseen by CSUD, consisting of 8 members, namely: CSUD's Director, the doctoral advisors' spokesperson in the CSUD, 5 doctoral advisors designated through the Rector's Decree, and a spokesperson for the doctoral students <http://doctorate.LBUSibiu.ro/ro/csud/>. Currently, in the academic year 2019-2020 (SER), 479 doctoral students are enrolled in different years of

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



their doctoral programs, 32 are in Management programs, who work under the supervision of 5 advisers, three with permanent tenure at LBUS, and two already retired.

## 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;
- 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

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. 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.

LBUS in its presentation at the panel meetings and documents showed a capacity of administrative and managerial institutional structure, furthermore, it was obvious that new management was introduced a year ago brought new energy and plans for the LBUS. Also, according to the presented results, LBUS has sufficient financial resources, obtained from different funding sources. LBUS organizes university-level doctoral studies through the Institution for Organising Doctoral Studies in accordance with the Regulations for organizing and conducting doctoral studies within. The regulating document consists of 16 chapters stipulating different principles and fields of application and covering all the above-mentioned rules and regulations.

IOSUD-LBUS is led by the Council for Doctoral Studies, appointed for a 4-year term till 2024, and consists of 8 members: the CSUD director, 1 (one) member of the interdisciplinary doctoral school, 1 student member chosen through, and 5 members appointed by the University's Rector according to them the Methodology regarding the appointment of CSUD.

IOSUD-LBUS performed doctoral programs through the doctoral schools exclusively, namely the Interdisciplinary Doctoral School (Școala Doctorală Interdisciplinară – SDI-LBUS), led by a director of the doctoral school, as well as the Council of the Doctoral School. Admission of doctoral students is also regulated and in line with all required regulations (University's Admission Regulation).



All Doctoral advisors need to fulfill the minimum mandatory requirements for the bestowal of the habilitation degree for the field in which they are entitled to advise doctoral theses in effect at the time of their appointment or election as members in CSUD or CSDI.

Functional management structures are established and conducting regular meetings. The contract for doctoral studies, the doctoral thesis agreement (contract) stipulates the rights and obligations assigned to IOSUD–LBUS, to the doctoral students, and to the doctoral advisors. Internal procedures for the analysis and approval of proposals regarding the training for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

The regulations of the doctoral school provide criteria, procedures, and mandatory standards in regard to the following aspects Annex A.1.1.1.01 (Regulamentul de organizare și desfășurare a studiilor universitare de doctorat în LBUS): a) the admission of new doctoral advisors; b) the decision-making process; c) the procedures regarding changes of a doctoral advisor if needed; d) the circumstances in which the doctoral program can be discontinued; e) the prevention of fraud in scientific research and plagiarism; f) ensuring the access to research resources; g) the doctoral students' attendance obligations, according to a Methodology authored by the Ministry.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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 existence and effectiveness of an appropriate IT system to keep track of doctoral students and their academic background.

LBUS has a digital system for the registration of all enrolled students, the UMS–University Management System, which served as an Intranet for the students ([https://ums.LBUSibiu.ro/ums/do/secure/inregistrare\\_user](https://ums.LBUSibiu.ro/ums/do/secure/inregistrare_user)). The doctoral studies office implemented an independent information system in order to keep the record of the doctoral students.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.



LBUS used two software for verifying the similarity percentage of doctoral theses: sistemeantiplagiat.ro and Check for plagiarism. All submitted doctoral theses need to be checked through the system to determine the similarity percentage. The theses whose percentages fall outside of the allowed limits are not approved for public defense.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

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.

In the observed period, LBUS provide the following grants: Institutional development funds: Field 5 and 6: Excellent research – LBUS, for years 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, with a series of courses and workshops available for doctoral students and doctoral advisors; Institutional development funds Field 4, for years 2018, 2019, 2020 with the aim to support the activities conducted by the LBUS student entrepreneurial societies (SAS); and Field 5: the improvement in the quality of teaching, including the adherence to the academic deontology and ethical code of conduct.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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%.

In each academic year, LBUS grants a total of 10 full-tuition scholarships to the candidates enrolled in paid positions who obtain excellent results during the admission trial, but who do not succeed in occupying a tuition-free position. These scholarships are allotted for the entire period of doctoral studies (3 or 4 years). The proportion of doctoral students who receive financial support through research or institutional development grants surpasses 20%.

Among other funding sources apart, from governmental funding for doctoral scholarships, LBUS offered to students: (a) Scholarships for the reward of research results; (b) Mobility grants; (c) Employing doctoral students in the IOSUD; (d) Employing doctoral students in research grants; (e) Contracts signed with



individuals or legal entities for the granting of scholarships or through which financial support is granted for the continuation of doctoral studies.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.

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

The revenue from the doctoral scholarships granted to the university through an institutional contract and the revenue from the doctoral students' tuition fees are centralized university-wide. LBUS allocates a 15% percentage on average for the doctoral students' professional training (conference attendance, mobilities abroad, publishing papers in peer-reviewed journals and other forms of scientific dissemination, and so on). Doctoral students expressed satisfaction with the found availability.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.

## Criterion A.2. Research infrastructure

Standard A.2.1. The IOSUD has a modern 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 in service within the Interdisciplinary Doctoral School consists of the research infrastructure of the faculties, the libraries, and the research centers acknowledged within the university: <http://bcu.LBUSibiu.ro/>. The research infrastructure associated with the centers for economic research is publicly accessible on the EERIS platform: Engage in the European Research Infrastructures System (<https://eeris.eu/ERIO-2000-000X-0039>). During the past 12 months, LBUS has invested approximately 1.000.000 EUR in its research infrastructure. The University has also received a 4.200.000 EUR donation from the Hasso Plattner Institute for the support of research and the development of research infrastructure.

Recommendations:

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



The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

At the reported period, a total of five doctoral advisors were affiliated with the doctoral program in Management (Table A.3.1.1.). The evaluation checklists, imposed by the National Council for Attesting Titles, Diplomas and Certificates [CNATDCU] (according to the Order of the Minister of National Education, Research, and Sports No 6129/2016) confirmed that doctoral advisors meet the national minimal standards to supervise doctoral theses, is presented in Annex A.3.1.1. (Management Grad îndeplinire standarde abilitare). The doctoral advisors affiliated with the doctoral program in Management meet 60% of the national minimal standards laid down in OMENCS No 6129/2016.

Recommendations: Consider involving new advisers.

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

Five doctoral advisors are currently supervising theses in Management, three full-time employed 60%, and two are already retired (40%).

Recommendations: Anticipate engaging new supervisors.

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

The study subjects in the educational program in Management are taught by doctoral advisors within the Interdisciplinary Doctoral School (Table A.3.1.3), who meet the national minimum standards.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.



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

All of the doctoral thesis advisors meet this indicator, while most of them supervised no more than eight theses, currently only one supervises more than eight doctoral candidates, and in total less than 12 (evidence Table A.3.1.4.) what is in line with the required limit of 20% (1 advisor out of a total of 5).

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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, 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.

As it is evident from the document provided on the website (CVs) and additional data the doctoral advisors in the field of Management are engaged in various scholarly activities, participate in conferences, and regularly publish articles or books. Also, in the observed period of the last five years, they produced, on average, at least one article/paper/review issue (as editorial members) each and research related areas.

Recommendations: CV for Prof.univ.dr. EMANOIL MUSCALU is not available, Eror 404

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

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





The doctoral advisors are engaged in various scholarly activities, participated in conferences, and regularly published articles or books. Four out of five doctoral advisors (80) are actively involved in research endeavors and their scientific work in the observed period is highly above the mandatory 25% (CNATDCU national minimum standards).

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

During the evaluation period, 32 Master's graduates applied for admission to the doctoral program in Management, of whom 18 coming for higher education institutions other than LBUS. A total of 26 seats were financed from the national budget. The ratio of Master's graduates of other higher education institutions who applied for admission to the doctoral program in Management in the past five years to the number of seats financed from the national budget is 0.69. And the ratio between the all doctoral candidates and the number of seats funded by budget is 1,23.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

Admission to doctoral study programs is based on competition and the Code of doctoral university studies, approved by Government Decision no. 681/2011, with subsequent amendments and completions and the Regulation on the organization and conduct of doctoral studies at the University "Lucian Blaga" in Sibiu. The admission criteria include 1) language proficiency test (English, French, German), assessed with the



grade Admitted / Rejected; 2) interview with admission commission based on the doctoral research specialty/domain, and research project elaborated following the requirements of Regulation for admission to doctoral studies 2020, and evaluation of the research project.

Recommendations: Encourage Ph.D. candidates to publish or present research topics or ideas at international conferences before officially joining the Doctoral school.

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.

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

In line with presented data drop-out rate never exceed 30%, and within three years from admission it showed an average of 9.37%

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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. 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.

Observed academic study programme in Management included three compulsory courses: Academic Ethics and Integrity, Research Methodologies, and Advanced Economics.

Recommendations: Even fulfilled indicator some statistical data processing course may be introduced at least as elective one.

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

The doctoral study programme in Management features a course in Academic Ethics and Integrity.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.

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



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

Course syllabuses feature the structure of the courses/seminars and the competencies doctoral candidates will acquire upon completion, with specified “the learning outcomes”. In course syllabuses, specific knowledge, skills, and responsibility that doctoral students should acquire after completing each discipline or through the research activities are listed.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

The doctoral students are counseled by a Doctoral Advisory Committee. Supervision and feedback are provided via electronic means (by telephone, e-mail, Google Meet, etc.) or face-to-face meetings, when the public health context allows it. Students expressed their satisfaction with the counseling.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

In the observed period, 15 doctoral candidates were enrolled in the three-year doctoral programme in Economic Sciences. A total of 17 teaching staff supervised their degree progress. The ratio of doctoral candidates to teaching staff providing doctoral supervision was 15:17, i.e., 0.88, and it is above required level.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

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



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.

In the past five years, 15 doctoral theses were defended, as is evident from Table B.3.1.1. this performance indicator is reached Annex B.3.1.1. But, there is one thing to note. Out of five supervisors, 4 of them have doctoral theses defense in the past five years, while 3 of them have more than 1 successful defense in the observed period. It is more than welcome to explore this situation and see why only 3 (4) out of 5 supervisors manage to have successful candidates.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

The 15 doctoral candidates who were awarded a Doctor's degree in the past five years participated with papers in at least one international conference, abroad or in Romania.

Recommendations: Even meet the indicator it is obvious some supervisors produce more scientific cooperation with the Doctoral candidates than others, so the recommendation is to make the distribution more normal. And keep in mind that the whole procedure cannot be relayed to retired supervisors.

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

A total of two doctoral theses in Management are supervised by the same doctoral advisor and the same external referent, from a different higher education institution per year. Two doctoral theses supervised by the same doctoral advisor are defended per year.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

The ratio of doctoral theses in Management allocated to an external scientific specialist from a different higher education institution to the doctoral theses defended in the past five years is 0.86 (13:15). The maximum number of doctoral theses in the field allotted to the same external referent is 13 (Annex B.3.2.1).

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.

## Domain C. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

\*general description of domain analysis.

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.

The IOSUD and in line with that LBUS, domain of Doctoral study Management relies upon and observes several regulations and procedures enabling the internal quality assurance and assessment listed below:

- 1) Regulation for the Organization of the Admission Exam to Doctoral Studies for the academic year 2021-2022
- 2) Operational Procedure for Online Admission to Doctoral Studies
- 3) LBUS Regulation regarding the Organization of Doctoral Studies
- 4) Operational Procedure for the Online Organization of Examination Activities in the Context of the Interdisciplinary Doctoral School affiliated to the Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu
- 5) Operational Procedure for the Assessment and Defence of Doctoral Thesis
- 6) Operational Procedure for the Organization of the Process for Awarding the Habilitation Title
- 7) Procedure of Automatic Recognition by LBUS of the title of doctoral advisor awarded by other accredited higher education institutions abroad



- 8) Procedure of automatic recognition of the title of doctorate holder
- 9) Procedure of automatic recognition of academic titles obtained in accredited higher education institutions abroad
- 10) Procedure for Rewarding Research Results
- 11) Methodology for the approval of external mobility grants awarded from LBUS and Hasso Plattner funds.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

LBUS has designed a questionnaire to collect feedback from all students, including doctoral students regarding the overall doctoral program. For the academic year, 2019-2020 questionnaire was disseminated via Google Forms to 278 students enrolled in the doctoral training program; with a response rate of 66%, about 80% of the respondents were content or very satisfied (on a scale from 1 to 5) with the overall doctoral program. Students identified challenges as the limited access to the research infrastructure (triggered by the pandemic context), while some other advantages popped up like a series of open access sources – available free of charge from an institutional account – to other fields of doctoral studies, such as economics, philology or law.

Recommendations: Show results for Doctoral domain Management separately, and keep the survey each year to improve the situation during the study cycle. Also, there is no clear feedback about the supervision procedure or international mobility, quality of the classes, etc.

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

All relevant and above-mentioned information for potential candidates or current doctoral students are available online at the IOSUD website, in electronic format in Romanian.

Recommendations: All information should be provided in English to provide international students with full information.

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

For all registered doctoral candidates the LBUS Library provides access to books, articles, international libraries, etc.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

Each doctoral student after the approval of the doctoral advisor has access to the two antiplagiarism systems: sistemeantiplagiat.ro and checkforplafiarisma.net.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

All doctoral students have access to the relevant research and academic facilities subsequent to a request and approval by the doctoral advisor.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

Since attendance at the international conference prior to the thesis defense is necessary this indicator is 100% fulfilled. LBUS has partnerships and mobility agreements with universities abroad, research institutes, companies operating in the specific field of study, aimed at the academic mobility of doctoral students and scholars (Appendix C.3.1.1 ERASMUS Agreements concluded for the doctoral study cycle).

Recommendations: Even with a 100% of fulfilled indicator of attendance of international conferences it is obvious that international mobility can and should be improved, especially for the purpose of internationalization of LBUS and doctoral candidates and future LBUS employees, with longer stays abroad.

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.

In the observed period several top-ranking experts and scholars have been invited to deliver lectures and speeches addressed primarily to doctoral candidates.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not 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.).

LBUS is included in affiliation to the EUA Council for Doctoral Education and Pride Network – the Association for Professionals in Doctoral Education, furthermore LBUS participated in international educational fairs: NAFSA 2019 Washington. Some international experts were involved in thesis defense committees such as Prof. Ph.D. Luis Vellasco – Valladolid University, Spain; Prof. Ph.D. Ioana Mărășescu-Galleron – „Sorbonne Nouvelle” University, Paris, France; Prof. Ph.D. Tiphane Samoyault – „Sorbonne Nouvelle” University, Paris, France; Prof. Ph.D. Vincenzo Toreta – Isubria University, Varese, Italy. Some good examples are also: Eugen Ionesco doctoral scholarships: in the framework of the





Programme coordinated by the University Agency of Francophony, a number of international doctoral students (France, Algeria, and The Republic of Moldova) have been supervised.

Recommendations:

The indicator is **fulfilled**/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.

#### IV. SWOT Analysis

<p><u>Strengths:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- good library</li> <li>- student office as support</li> <li>- long tradition</li> <li>- new LBUS management</li> </ul>	<p><u>Weaknesses:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- lack of international mobilities</li> <li>- decreasing number of Ph.D. candidate</li> <li>- low level of English</li> <li>- 40% of retired supervisors</li> <li>- three out of five fully active supervisors</li> </ul>
<p><u>Opportunities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- base of Ph.D. study programmes for Romanian language speakers</li> <li>- good international network</li> <li>- good connection with the automobile and tourism industry</li> </ul>	<p><u>Threats:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- global competition</li> <li>- internationalization of HE in the EU</li> <li>- national legislation and the short period of studying 3 years</li> </ul>

#### V. Overview of judgments awarded and of the recommendations

No.	Type of indicator (*, C)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
1.	C	A.3.1.1.	Fulfilled	Consider involving new advisers.
2.	*	*A.3.1.2	Fulfilled	Anticipate engaging new supervisors.
3.	*	*B.1.2.1.	Fulfilled	Encourage PhD candidates to publish or present research topic or idea at the international conferences before official joining the Doctoral school.
4.	*	*B.3.1.2.	Fulfilled	Encourage all supervisors to produce more scientific papers with doctoral candidates



5.	C	C.2.1.1.	Fulfilled	Have all doctoral study related information in English at website
6.	*	*C.3.1.1.	Fulfilled	Improve international mobility, longer stays

## VI. Conclusions and general recommendations

It is obvious LBUS has young and proactive management, recently established. The main concern is about the level of English language knowledge within LBUS professors, and a small number of Ph.D. defenses in the observed period. Most of the professors presented at the meetings didn't show the conversational level of English language knowledge, and we have been informed they are much better at reading. Lack of certain English knowledge level will be a serious obstacle to the necessary way of internationalization of the institution.

It is obvious that in line with the number of students even with an appropriate number of supervisors number or percentage of graduates is relatively small, with a clear observation that 3 out of 5 supervisors have carried out most of the successful graduates. Internationalization of all Doctoral candidates along with an international experience must be included.

## 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.