



## ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA UNIVERSITY OF IASI

### External Evaluation Report; Educational Sciences domain level

# The External Evaluation Report of a Doctoral Study Domain

## I. Introduction

I was invited by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS) to join the evaluation team for the institutional evaluation of doctoral studies at the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi (AIC UI), namely of its domain of Educational Sciences.

I would like to express my gratitude to Mr. Sorin Alecsa, an ARACIS officer, for his very helpful support throughout the evaluation process. I also benefited from a highly collegial approach of the whole group of evaluators led by Prof. Nicoleta Corbu, the Evaluation Director and Prof. Razvan Nistor, the Coordinator of the IOSUD Committee, for their very helpful and supportive approach. I would also like to thank very much Prof. Daniel Mara for his collegial leadership of the team focused on the domain of Educational Sciences and to Daniel Iancu, the evaluation team member. Last but not least, I would like to thank the colleagues who took care of interpreting during some meetings. All these activities were very helpful.

On the basis of the sources of information mentioned, I herewith submit my report on the Educational Science PhD domain at the AIC UI as I have perceived it. I am well aware this is a limited view by an external evaluator, and a much deeper insight would be needed to really catch the essence of some evaluated issues. My evaluation, as well as my recommendations for possible consideration should be understood as a collegial attempt to provide the colleagues at the AIC UI and ARACIS with opinions with the aim to contribute to possible improvements at the AIC UI as well as the quality assurance of higher education in Romania as such.

The AIC UI is a relatively heterogenous institution with a high number of doctoral study programmes (the evaluation was focused on 27 domains) from a range of sciences. According to the SAR, doctoral studies of Educational Sciences were established in the academic year 2005/2006 and currently there are eight supervisors for this programme. Educational Sciences programme closely co-exists with the domain of Psychology, since both programmes are organized under the auspices of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences.



## **II. Methods used**

Prior to the site visit I studied the English version of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) of the AIC UI and some other relevant documents. During the visit, which was carried out online due to the pandemic restrictions on 9 to 17 September 2021, I had a good opportunity to enhance the information I had received about doctoral studies of Educational Sciences at AIC UI.

The site visit started with a preliminary online meeting of experts, who are members of the evaluation team. At this meeting, preparation and harmonization of evaluation stages in the blended format was discussed. Then the online meeting with the AIC UI's leading representatives followed. During the whole period of evaluation, I had a chance to participate at a number of meetings with representatives of the AIC UI, leaders of doctoral schools, academic staff, members of the Ethics Commission, QA representatives, PhD students, alumni, employers and other relevant persons. All this helped me to complete the image of the institution.

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

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

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

The mission of the Doctoral School of Psychology and Educational Sciences stresses respect of international research standards in the work with the students. It seems that two out of three pillars of the standard university are emphasized in this mission (teaching and research), while the third role of the university is implicit there. (SAR, p. 7, 17)

The goals following stages of the doctoral studies correspond to the mission of the programme: attracting and selecting doctoral students motivated to do research and with the relevant skills or achievements in this direction; skills development in advanced scientific research and in academic writing and reporting; careful guidance of doctoral students and directing them towards quality research practice that follows research ethics and deontology, the principles of integrity and accountability of academic research and promoting equity; conducting research of a very good quality that follows international research standards; publishing research results in renowned international journals, ISI indexed or in individual or collective volumes. (SAR, p. 17) From my point of view, one more ambition would still deserve attention here: opening up the doors for PhD students to the international academic/research community, helping them to understand how it functions and integrate within it. The programme leaders declare the respect to the values of discernment, justice, courage, temperance as well as confidence/accuracy/reliability, honesty, respect and accountability.



*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 approval of proposals regarding the training for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies.*

The AIC UI has its own regulations for organizing doctoral studies, both on the level of the whole institution, and on the level of Doctoral School of Psychology and Education. These regulations seem to be in line with the existing legislation. The director of the doctoral school is appointed according to the law, the Council of Doctoral School is elected by the assembly of PhD coordinators, resp. by PhD students involved in the assembly. The results of these procedures are validated by the university senate.

Annually, the methodology for organizing and conducting PhD studies (incl. admission procedures) is approved. The same can be said about the mechanism of recognizing PhD supervisors and functional management structures (the Council of Doctoral School), the contract of doctoral university studies, and internal procedures for analysis and approval of proposals on the subject of trainign programs based on advanced doctoral studies.

*Recommendation:*

- *Consider the possibility of reflecting the third role of the university in the mission of PhD programme of Educational Sciences.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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



Mandatory criteria, procedures and standards as specified in the indicator are a part of the regulation of the doctoral school.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

The institution has sufficient logistical resources necessary to fulfill the mission of the doctoral studies of Educational Sciences.

***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.***

The IT system supporting the doctoral studies seems to be effective and in place, the Department of Statistics and Informatization of the IOSUD-UI seems to be maintaining and developing this system. Two projects specifically focused on ensuring transparency in students management and implementation of the single matriculation register seem to be playing a positive role in this context.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

Since 2006, the IOSUD-UI has in use the special module with the functionality focused on verifying percentage of similarity in doctoral theses (Blackboard – SafeAssign) Starting from 2018, the Turnitin application is purchased annually for this purpose and supervisors as well as PhD students have a chance to work with it.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

It seems, financial resources are in principal used optimally in the context of doctoral studies of Educational Sciences at IOSUD-UI.

***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.***



The SAR contains the list of 10 projects funded by specific grants, some of them directly related to human resources development in PhD studies of Educational Sciences. It needs to be said, that the indicator is met, however, more fundamental research grants would be beneficial for the domain.

*Recommendations:*

- *Consider possibilities to get more funding (from external, but maybe also internal sources) for the basic/fundamental research of senior academics in order to have a firm base to which doctoral research projects may be linked.*

***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%.*

According to the SAR, there are 36% students receiving support grants for at least six months in the 2019/2020 academic year.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

***Performance Indicator \*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.).*

The exact information has not been provided by the actors of the domain Educational Sciences, with the explanation that all the accounting goes via university channels. In the SAR, there is some evidence about concrete support to students to take part at national and international scientific events. Also, covid-19 restrictions made the possibilities to attend professional training events much more limited for the PhD students.

***The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/ (the evaluation is not fully based on the data available)***

## **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.*



The IOSUD-UI has a solid research infrastructure to support the conduct of the doctoral studies in the Educational Sciences. This is in line with the mission and objectives of the study program, and involves IT hardware and software, library, access to international databases, and more.

**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.*

Those involved in the doctoral studies of Educational Sciences have access to research infrastructure of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences. This includes the Doctoral School Hall with 20 work stations, some active computers and other IT equipment, wireless connection, library sources, incl. the electronic ones (relevant international databases).

***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.*

Overall, the staff involved in the PhD program of Educational Sciences can be considered as well qualified for this task.

**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.*

According to the SAR, from 8 supervisors involved in PhD program Educational Sciences, 4 of them completely fulfill the minimum CNATDCU standards, the others do so partially.

***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.*

The vast majority of PhD advisors have full-time contract with the IOSUD-UI.

***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.*

The disciplines from the PPUA (the preparation program based on advanced university studies) which are specific for the field are taught by the UI's full-time staff with a sufficient professional academic grades and experience.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

**Performance Indicator \*A.3.1.4.** *The percentage of doctoral thesis advisors who concomitantly coordinate more than 8 doctoral students, but no more than 12, who are themselves studying in doctoral programs<sup>1</sup> does not exceed 20%.*

The supervisors involved in the program supervise no more than 8 dissertation research projects (in case of students of the grace period this does not go beyond 12 dissertations). In general, a number of supervised dissertations per supervisor differs across the supervisor's body. There is no system of training of supervisors in the skills of supervision.

*Recommendation:*

- *Consider the possibility to introduce formalized training for supervisors to make sure their supervision skills development can actually take place.*

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

PhD supervisors involved in the program under evaluation seem to have sufficient and internationally visible scientific activity.

**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*

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<sup>1</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.



*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.*

According to thr SAR, 80% of the supervisors have at least 5 databased papers. Also, they are involved in respected editorial boards, academic associations, or international committees of conferences.

***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.*

7 out of 8 supervisors involved in the program Educational Sciences have been scientifically active for the past 5 years, achieving a score above the required 25%.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

## **Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

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

The quality and diversity of candidates enrolled for the admission is satisfactory, there were some problems with the number of applicants, graduates of the master programs. Admission procedures are well thought over and effectively put in practice.

*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.*





As it appears, in the period 2015-2020 the ratio between the number of graduates who entered the competition for admission to the doctoral studies of Educational Sciences at the UI and the number of places funded from the state budget is around 12%..

*Recommendations*

- *Consider possibilities to increase the number of the master program graduates applying for the doctoral program of Educational Sciences at the AIC UI.*

***The indicator is partially fulfilled.***

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

The data available indicate the candidates admitted to doctoral studies of Educational Sciences at the UI demonstrate sufficiently their 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.*

There are clear admission rules and procedures at the AIC UI, which concerns the doctoral programme of Educational Sciences as well. These rules and procedures accentuate relevant selection criteria such as previous academic, research and professional performance, the applicant's interest in research, publication profile in the field and the proposal for a future research project. The evaluation of research project represents 50%, remaining 50% are allocated to the interview with the applicant.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

The drop out 2 years after the admission does not exceed 30% in any of five student cohorts within the program.

***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.*



The training programme in PhD studies is based on the adequate development of the doctoral students' research skills and ethical behaviour in science. The curriculum is designed "to develop skills at an advanced level in the four key areas/key competences related to scientific research: defining/planning research design and data collection; analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, reporting of research findings and compliance with ethical norms and academic integrity throughout the whole research and publication process." (SAR, p. 65)

***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.*

The curriculum contains at least three subjects relevant to the students' training and it is designed to meet the needs of the students to develop advanced competences in educational research. Two of these disciplines relate to research methodology (qualitative analysis, design of research) and to academic writing. The curriculum is focused on the development of four key areas: defining/planning research design and data collection; analysis of quantitative and qualitative data; reporting of research findings; ethics norms and academic integrity in research.

***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.*

See the text related to B.2.1.1

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

There seems to be a mechanism that makes academic training to specify learning outcomes which the students obtain after each discipline or research activity. This is linked with the student feedback in case of the doctoral studies of Educational Sciences.

***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.*



The system of guidance commissions seems to be in place and available to the students.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

The ratio does not seem to exceed 3:1.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

The results of doctoral studies seem to be satisfactory, and procedures of their evaluation, in principle, too.

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

Doctoral students of Educational Sciences seem to have a chance to capitalize on the research via presentations at conferences and scientific publications. They are mainly of a domestic nature (university- and national levels).

***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.

Students are producing the papers/articles as requested and it appears they are of a required quality.

***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.

There are numerous presentations of PhD students who have completed their studies of Educational Sciences during the evaluated period, and the ratio seems to be favourable.

***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.*

There seems to be significant number of external experts in the commissions for the public defense of PhD dissertations in the program under the evaluation and their involvement seems to be positive for the program.

**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.*

The number in focus does not exceed two.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

In case of the doctoral program of Educational Sciences the ratio in focus is 0,31.

***The indicator is partially fulfilled.***

## **Domain C. QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

*\*general description of domain analysis.*

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

The doctoral programme in focus is a part of the AIC UI's system of quality assurance. This system seems to be set up well, having its effective impact on the programme.

The Commission for Quality Assurance is the central body of this arrangement, the Quality Assurance Code and Quality Manual play a key role as for the implementation. At the level of the Faculty, the Commission for Evaluation and Quality Assurance is established and interlinked with the central Commission and with the very programme under the evaluation.

Based on the methodology approved by the university, the AIC UI annually conducts an internal evaluation of the activities of the doctoral schools. A periodic self-evaluation is part of this process. The focus of this procedure is on the fulfilment of legal requirements, identification of good practices,



evaluation of human resources, research, material endowment, evaluation of research results, quality management and other aspects. It may be stated that an adequate institutional framework and procedures are in place and relevant quality assurance policies are applied at the AIC UI. The policies are designed accordingly with the focus on all the main processes; they emphasize assurance of quality, with some regard to the enhancement of quality, too.

A procedure of analysis of topics of the PhD study programmes including self-evaluation activities is regularly carried out at the doctoral programme level. There is an internal mechanism that covers the initiation, approval, monitoring and evaluation of PhD study programmes. Evaluation by supervisors as well as the evaluation of the supervisors and programmes by PhD students is conducted on a regular basis and it is a part of the arrangement.

It is ensured that key stakeholder representatives are participating in these processes.

*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 doctoral school in the domain Educational Sciences applies the procedures ensuring continuous development of the evaluation process and its internal quality assurance. These procedures seem to relate effectively to all the above mentioned criteria.

***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.***

Mechanisms of getting student feedback and working with it seem to be in place – they seem to be addressing the very doctoral program as well as academic and administrative services.



***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.*

It seems the necessary information for the doctoral students, those interested in the studies (future candidates as well as broader public) are available in the e-format.

***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.*

The webpage related to the program under the evaluation seems to be offering the necessary information, as enlisted above (most of it in English version, too).

***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.*

The doctoral school in which the program Educational Sciences is realised, seems to be providing the doctoral students access to the resources that they need to conduct their studies and research.

***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.***



The AIC UI is providing its students with access to international e-databases which are relevant sources of the data for the doctoral students of Educational Sciences, too. The SAR contains the list of these databases.

***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.

Doctoral students can use such software (Turnitin) with the agreement of their supervisors.

***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.

As for the infrastructure, the students seem to have the necessary conditions for learning, including the access to an international database and other study resources. Student scholarships for research are also available and some students reported they were benefiting from it.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

12 out of 40 PhD students of Educational Sciences are foreigners. From the available documents, but also from interviews with various stakeholders of the programme, it may be concluded that there is a potential for the development within the programme in terms of the effective interconnection of both groups of students within the programme.

PhD students of Educational Sciences have the opportunity to benefit from mobility arrangements. The mobility traffic seems to be rather limited and one-way oriented, though. There are not many outgoing students and practically no incoming students who could integrate into PhD studies at the Educational Science domain. It would be beneficial to have more frequent participation of guest speakers/visiting professors in the PhD programme, too. The number of joint/double degree studies is low.

***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.

As mentioned above, the doctoral school and its students of Educational Sciences can benefit from some agreements, but student and as well staff mobility is low (not only in pandemic times).

*Recommendations:*

- Consider possibilities to encourage PhD students to use opportunities for longer study stays at relevant foreign institutions.
- Consider possibilities to attract incoming international mobility students more effectively so that they get involved in the Educational Sciences doctoral programme/doctoral school activities.

**The indicator is partially fulfilled.**

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

Within the program, some international visiting experts are participating and doctoral students can benefit from this.

**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.).*

There is some support to the above mentioned activities, but apparently not sufficient.

*Recommendation:*

- Consider possibilities to have more PhD students within the framework of joint/double degree.

**The indicator is partially fulfilled.**

## IV. SWOT Analysis

<b><u>Strengths:</u></b> Regionally and nationally well established doctoral program.	<b><u>Weaknesses:</u></b> Weaker links between junior and senior fundamental research.
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Experienced staff.	Lacking training os supervisors. Internationalisation of the program.
<b><u>Opportunities:</u></b> Further development of the program in the region and beyond.	<b><u>Threats:</u></b> Fragmentation of the doctoral research. Risks of supersvion process (both for PhD students, and for supervisors) Isolation of the program from international community.

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

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
1.	PI	<p><b>A.1.1.1.</b> 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> <p>f) the contract for doctoral studies;</p> <p>g) internal procedures for the analysis and approval of proposals regarding the training for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies.</p>	<b>Fulfilled</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider the possibility of reflecting the third role of the university in the mission of PhD programme of Educational Sciences.</li> </ul>
2.	PI	<p><b>A.1.1.2.</b> The doctoral school' Regulation includes mandatory criteria, procedures and standards binding on the aspects specified</p>	<b>Fulfilled</b>	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		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.		
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.	Fulfilled	
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.	Fulfilled	
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 evaluated domain within the past 5 years. The grants address relevant themes for the respective domain and, as a rule, are engaging doctoral students.	Fulfilled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider possibilities to get more funding (from external, but maybe also internal sources) for the basic/fundamental research of senior academics in order to have a firm base to which doctoral research projects may be linked.</li> </ul>
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%.	Fulfilled	
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.).	Fulfilled/partly fulfilled	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
8.	<b>CPI</b>	<b>A.2.1.1.</b> 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	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
9.	<b>CPI</b>	<b>A.3.1.1.</b> 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.	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
10.	<b>PI *</b>	<b>A.3.1.2.</b> At least 50% of all doctoral advisors have a full-time employment contract for an indefinite period with the IOSUD.	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
11.	<b>PI</b>	<b>A.3.1.3.</b> 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.	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
12.	<b>PI *</b>	<b>A.3.1.4.</b> The percentage of doctoral thesis advisors who concomitantly coordinate more than 8 doctoral students, but no more than	<b>Fulfilled</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider the possibility to introduce formalized training for supervisors to make sure their supervision skills development can actually take place.</li> </ul>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		12, who are themselves studying in doctoral programs does not exceed 20%.		
13.	<b>CPI</b>	<p><b>A.3.2.1.</b> 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.</p>	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
14.	<b>PI *</b>	<p><b>A.3.2.2.</b> 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>	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
15.	<b>PI *</b>	<p><b>B.1.1.1.</b> 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</p>	<b>Partially fulfilled</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider possibilities to increase the number of the master program graduates applying for the doctoral program of Educational Sciences at the AIC UI.</li> </ul>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		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.		
16.	PI *	<b>B.1.2.1.</b> 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.	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
17.	PI	<b>B.1.2.2.</b> The expelling rate, including renouncement / dropping out of doctoral students 3, respectively 4, years after admission does not exceed 30%.	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
18.	PI	<b>B.2.1.1.</b> 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.	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
19.	PI	<b>B.2.1.2.</b> 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.	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
20.	PI	<b>B.2.1.3.</b> 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.	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
21.	PI	<b>B.2.1.4.</b> All along the duration of the doctoral training, doctoral students in the domain	<b>Fulfilled</b>	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		receive counselling/guidance from functional guidance commissions, which is reflected in written guidance and feedback or regular meeting.		
22.	<b>CPI</b>	<b>B.2.1.5.</b> 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.	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
23.	<b>CPI</b>	<b>B.3.1.1.</b> 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	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
24.	<b>PI *</b>	<b>B.3.1.2.</b> 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.	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
25.	<b>PI *</b>	<b>B.3.2.1.</b> 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.	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
26.	<b>PI *</b>	<b>B.3.2.2.</b> 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	<b>Partially fulfilled</b>	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		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.		
27.	PI	<p><b>C.1.1.1.</b> 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"> <li>a) the scientific work of Doctoral advisors;</li> <li>b) the infrastructure and logistics necessary to carry out the research activity;</li> <li>c) the procedures and subsequent rules based on which doctoral studies are organized;</li> <li>d) the scientific activity of doctoral students;</li> <li>e) the training program based on advanced academic studies of doctoral students;</li> <li>f) social and academic services (including for participation at different events, publishing papers etc.) and counselling made available to doctoral students.</li> </ul>	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
28.	PI *	<p><b>C.1.1.2.</b> 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>	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
29.	CPI	<p><b>C.2.1.1.</b> 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"> <li>a) the Doctoral School regulation;</li> <li>b) the admission regulation;</li> <li>c) the doctoral studies contract;</li> <li>d) the study completion regulation including the procedure for the public presentation of the thesis;</li> </ul>	<b>Fulfilled</b>	

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		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.		
30.	PI	<b>C.2.2.1.</b> All doctoral students have free access to one platform providing academic databases relevant to the doctoral studies domain of their thesis.	Fulfilled	
31.	PI	<b>C.2.2.2.</b> 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.	Fulfilled	
32.	PI	<b>C.2.2.3.</b> 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.	Fulfilled	
33.	PI *	<b>C.3.1.1.</b> 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	Partially fulfilled	<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider possibilities to encourage PhD students to use opportunities for longer study stays at relevant foreign institutions.</li> <li>• Consider possibilities to attract incoming international mobility students more effectively so that they get involved in the Educational Sciences doctoral programme/doctoral school activities.</li> </ul>



No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		target at the level of the European Higher Education Area.		
34.	PI	<b>C.3.1.2.</b> 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.	<b>Fulfilled</b>	
35.	PI	<b>C.3.1.3.</b> 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.).	<b>Partially fulfilled</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Consider possibilities to have more PhD students within the framework of joint/double degree.</i></li> </ul>

## VI. Conclusions and general recommendations

The program under the evaluation is well established regionally and nationally and seems to have a potential for further development.

## VII. Annexes

The detailed schedule is attached as a separate document.

Prof. Milan Pol

Brno, 12 October 2021