

## **The External Evaluation Report of a Doctoral Study Domain**

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

University of Iasi, Alexandru Ioan Cuza, asked for a periodic external evaluation of their doctoral studies/schools. Doctoral School of Psychology and Educational Studies is one among them, and it embraces two domains of doctoral studies, psychology and educational studies.

Doctoral School of Psychology and educational Studies was presented by the Director, Professor Constantin Ticu, while the members of the evaluation panel were:

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

The external evaluation process was accomplished in hybrid mode by combining face-to-face site-visit and online sessions in the period of September 9 to 17, 2021.

Psychology field has a long history of being a part of higher education system, dating back to 1878. In particular, it should be mentioned the name of Eduard Gruber, who was supervised by Wundt, and who was the first one to establish an experimental laboratory in the country. Today psychology is thought and studied at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Studies, established in 1997.

The Doctoral School of Psychology and Educational Studies was established in 2005-06. It has 12 coordinators (supervisors) for Psychology and 8 coordinators (supervisors) for educational Sciences. It is headed by the director and Doctoral School Council, consisting of four professors and two doctoral candidates. Since their establishment, the School had more than 100 doctoral candidates. Annually enrolls 10 doctoral candidates, and in acad. year 2020-21 the School had 49 doctoral candidates in total.

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## II. Methods used

The evaluation process has been performed following the common format of the external evaluations, well supported by the ARACIS, by the University, and by the Doctoral School, in particular by the Director of the Doctoral School, as well as by all the submitted documents, regulations, guidelines, the doctoral school report and all the relevant annexes. The School also assured translation when needed.

The face-to-face visit to the Faculty (classrooms, research centres with constitutive laboratories, library) was organised for, and accomplished by the Romanian panel members (Coordinator, Student-member), however since it was also video recorded in a real time, the international evaluator had an opportunity to 'visit' facilities.

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

## III. Analysis of ARACIS's performance indicators

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

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

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

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

#### **Performance Indicator A.1.1.1.**

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

*From the external perspective (international expert view) it seems that the level of administrative procedures could be a little bit more relaxed, flexible in order to enable additional or different procedures. For example, in order to attract more doctoral candidates from abroad or other universities, procedure of enrolment would require some adjustments. In general, it appears that different level regulations, from the referent national legislation to some university regulations, are too prescriptive.*

*In addition, financing provided by the University and-or Faculty would need to be increased in order to enhance research infrastructure. Or to be put in a different wording, high demand for publishing need to be adequately supported with institutional capacity, primarily facilities, research infrastructure and research funding.*



*Recommendations: Financing need to comply with high demand for research productivity.*  
**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator A.1.1.2.**

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

*Recommendations: none*  
**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

**Performance Indicator A.1.2.1.**

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

*Recommendations: none*  
**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator A.1.2.2.**

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

*Recommendations: none*  
**The indicator is fulfilled.**

*Standard A.1.3.*

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

**Performance Indicator A.1.3.1.**

*It seems that the Doctoral School and its researchers are active and trying to receive different grants, applying to different programme schemes. However, it has to be noticed that number of grants are already finished, and many of them are actually not research grants but do belong to different professional domains, capacity buildings, mobility etc.*

*Recommendations:*  
*It seems that more efforts needs to be put in receiving research grants.*  
*It would be also important to increase the number of PIs.*  
**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%.

*During the on-line site visit it has been observed that there is quite a significant difference between the doctoral candidates depending on their mode of financing, in particular related also to their teaching duties. It seems that the system is very unbalanced, and while some doctoral candidates do teach very little, some have extremely heavy load. This definitely has a negative impact on their research performance and often prolongs their time to complete a doctoral study.*

*Recommendations:*

*It is necessary to revisit the system of financing on one side and, on the other, to better balance focus on research and teaching load. Also, doctoral candidates who are fully employed outside the School-university could not be a full-time doctoral candidates. The status of being employed somewhere else, should automatically define their part-time status and different definition and distribution of expectation and responsibilities (legal regulations need to allow it).*

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

***Performance Indicator \*A.1.3.3.2*** *At least 10% of the total amount of doctoral grants obtained by the university through institutional contracts and of tuition fees collected from the doctoral students enrolled in the paid tuition system is used to reimburse professional training expenses of doctoral students (attending conferences, summer schools, training, programs abroad, publication of specialty papers or other specific forms of dissemination etc.).*

*Recommendations: none*

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

### **Standard A.2.1.**

*The IOSUD/Doctoral School has a dedicated facilities with research infrastructure to support the conduct of doctoral studies' specific activities.*

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



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

*Still, needs to be noticed that infrastructure in some areas of research is modest and needs to be significantly updated. A modern, adequate research infrastructure is a prerequisite for performing good quality research that will be resulted in high research productivity - published papers. For example, in the area of clinical psychology research infrastructure needs to be significantly improved; psychological tests themselves are not really research infrastructure, though they be of course helpful (it is more relevant for the professional practice); cognitive psychology lab needs upgrading etc. Of course, research infrastructure is financially demanding and this is why the institutional support is needed.*

*Recommendations:*

*Research infrastructure needs to be upgraded and further developed; in order to optimize expenses and to have better research capacity more focused research could be beneficial.*

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

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

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

*Recommendations: none*

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

*Recommendations: none*

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

*Recommendations: none*



**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

*Nevertheless, it has to be noticed that among coordinators (supervisors) there are significant number of those not having doctoral candidates at all, and few of them having many more, up to 11. Although it is still within regulations, international experience shows that we should be very careful what is the optimal number, and certainly overall opinion suggests that it is much less than the regulations (and actual practice). A proper supervision is a very demanding task, and as such it would be good to bear in mind that 'less is more'.*

*Recommendations:*

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

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

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

*Actually, more than 95 % of coordinators are internationally recognised researchers in their areas of expertise. They are all research active, and could serve as a good role models for their doctoral candidates, but according to available data, their impact and number of papers published in the best journals could be still increased.*

*Recommendations:*

*Further focus on research productivity and publishing papers in best international journals for the domain.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

**Performance Indicator \*A.3.2.2.** At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in a specific doctoral study domain continue to be active in their scientific field, and acquire at least 25% of the score requested by



*the minimal CNATDCU standards in force at the time of the evaluation, which are required and mandatory for acquiring their enabling certificate, based on their scientific results within the past five years.*

*Recommendations: none*

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

## **Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

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

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

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

*However, the enrolment procedure, and the practice to work with the potential doctoral candidate prior to admission, sometimes even a year in advance, does not facilitate applications from other institutions, either within or outside the country. Although there are some good positive examples (such as cooperation with Israeli institutions and students), overall practice might be an obstacle in the process of attracting other candidates.*

*Recommendations:*

*In order to enroll more doctoral candidates from other institutions, adequate changes would be needed in the process of selection and admission of doctoral students. Also, Doctoral school should be more openly oriented to use English as one of the official languages in order to attract more international doctoral candidates.*

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

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





However, although all these criteria are present, one can question how come the proposal for a research is the last to be listed, at the same time there are expectation, for example for already existing publications. Indeed, some candidates, in particular those who are older or those who have been already employed at the university might (and do) have some publications, but very often they are young, talented people, who are just starting early research career (this is what it should be the status of doctoral candidates or doctoral researchers) and they might be excellent talents with no experience in publishing at all. This should not be their disadvantage.

*Recommendations:*

*When considering the quality of new doctoral candidates, it would be good to reconsider some of the existing criteria for admission and the logic behind.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

*Recommendations: none*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

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

**Performance Indicator B.2.1.1.** *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 programme is well structured and it seems that there are not too many thought courses. The focus is from the very beginning on research. However, at the same time, the concept of having three independent studies, as a future constituents of the doctoral thesis, might not be optimal and at least, it is not very common approach. When, and if, the doctoral candidate has to start from the very beginning of his study programme with implementation of demanding research-statistical methods, as it has been heard during the site visit, this could be a premature step, and not necessarily beneficial for the overall development.*

*Recommendations:*

*For the benefits of the programme as well as individual doctoral candidates it is recommended to rethink the format of doctoral thesis as well as how to go through the study.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**





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

*However, although the performance indicator does not require, it is observed that offer of different courses for generic skills and/or transferable skills is very limited and provides very few opportunities to prepare candidates for different career paths.*

*Recommendations:*

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

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

*Recommendations:*

*It is highly recommended to fully respect the fact that doctoral study, the third cycle, is very different from the first and second (bachelor and master), and this fact also needs to be reflected in learning outcomes.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

*Recommendations: none*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

*Recommendations: none*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

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



**Performance Indicator B.3.1.1.**

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

*Still, it has been observed that relatively large number of students stay in so called 'grace zone', waiting for their papers to be published, and consequently, to be ready to graduate. The requirement for publishing, sometimes also hindered with previously mentioned teaching load some doctoral candidates have, slows down the proces of completion. Although psychology is one domain, it is very diversified, and in some subfields can take much longer to publish a paper than in some others. All these factors need to be considered and, probably, the requirement for number of published paper during the doctoral journey, should be revisited. Maybe, a good approach would be to recognise what is the minimum requirement for being able to defense the thesis and to graduate, and still leaving an option for some to be more research productive.*

*Recommendations:*

*Based on the facts, the number of students not being able to graduate because of not having papers published, to initiate reconsidering the requirements. Comparative analysis with other fields-domains might be useful, as well as with European university practice in doctoral education.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

*Recommendations: none*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

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

*Recommendations: none.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

*Recommendations: none*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**



## **Domain C. QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

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

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

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

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

*Recommendations: none*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

*Recommendations: none*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

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

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

- (a) the Doctoral School regulation;*
- (b) the admission regulation;*
- (c) the doctoral studies contract;*
- (d) the study completion regulation including the procedure for the public presentation of the thesis;*
- (e) the content of training program based on advanced academic studies;*



(f) the academic and scientific profile, thematic areas/research themes of the Doctoral advisors within the domain, as well as their institutional contact data;

(g) the list of doctoral students within the domain with necessary information (year of registration; advisor);

(h) information on the standards for developing the doctoral thesis;

(i) links to the doctoral theses' summaries to be publicly presented and the date, time, place where they will be presented; this information will be communicated at least twenty days before the presentation.

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

*Recommendations:*

*It would be beneficial for the Doctoral School to have all the info in English as well.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

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

*Recommendations: none*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

*Recommendations: none*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

*Recommendations: none*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

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

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

*Recommendations:*



*It would be beneficial to further support mobility, and in particular short-term research in laboratories abroad.*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

*Recommendations: none*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

*Recommendations: none*

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

#### IV. SWOT Analysis

<p><b><u>Strengths:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Operating procedures and available mechanisms on all levels</li> <li>-Available technical support and logistics for the implementation of doctoral programmes</li> <li>-Human resources</li> <li>-High level of motivation, both academic-research staff and doctoral candidates</li> <li>- Commitment to research and further development of the domain</li> <li>- Existing research productivity</li> <li>- Available facilities.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Weaknesses:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mission is defined too narrow, considering only research careers</li> <li>- Financial resources need to be improved</li> <li>-Wide spectar of research topics</li> <li>-To much pressure for publishing within the process of doctoral study</li> <li>-Research Infrastructure modest</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Opportunities:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To attract more international students</li> <li>-To attract more doctoral candidates from the neighbouring countries</li> <li>- To introduce English as one of official languages of a doctoral programme</li> <li>- Psychology and Educational Sciences can gain more relevance</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Threats:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Unfavorable economic and politic situation</li> <li>-Employability of graduates</li> <li>-Brain drain of young talents</li> <li>-Insufficient financing</li> </ul>

#### 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><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	<i>Financing need to comply with high demand for research productivity.</i>
2.	PI	<p><b>A.1.1.2.</b> The doctoral school' Regulation includes mandatory criteria, procedures and standards binding on the aspects specified in Article 17, paragraph (5) of the</p>	<b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	<i>None.</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		Government Decision No. 681/2011 on the approval of the Code of Doctoral Studies with subsequent amendments and additions.		
3.	PI	<b>A.1.2.1.</b> The existence and effectiveness of an appropriate IT system to keep track of doctoral students and their academic background.	<b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	<i>None.</i>
4.	PI	<b>A.1.2.2.</b> The existence and use of an appropriate software program and evidence of its use to verify the percentage of similarity in all doctoral theses.	<b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	<i>None.</i>
5.	IP	<b>A.1.3.1.</b> 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.	<b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	<i>It seems that more efforts needs to be put in receiving research grants. It would be also important to increase the number of PIs.</i>
6.	PI *	<b>A.1.3.2.</b> 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	<b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	<i>It is necessary to revisit the system of financing on one side and, on the other, to better balance focus on research and teaching load. Also, doctoral candidates who are fully employed outside the School-university could not be a full-time</i>



No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		individual persons or by legal entities, or who are financially supported through research or institutional / human resources development grants is not less than 20%.		<i>doctoral candidates. The status of being employed somewhere else, should automatically define their part-time status and different definition and distribution of expectation and responsibilities (legal regulations need to allow it).</i>
7.	PI *	<b>A.1.3.3.</b> 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.).	<b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	None.
8.	CPI	<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	<b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	<i>Research infrastructure needs to be upgraded and further developed; in order to optimize expenses and to have better research capacity more focused research could be beneficial.</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		the past 5 years will be presented distinctly		
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><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	None.
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><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	None.
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><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	None.

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
12.	PI *	<p><b>A.3.1.4.</b> The percentage of doctoral thesis advisors who concomitantly coordinate more than 8 doctoral students, but no more than 12, who are themselves studying in doctoral programs does not exceed 20%.</p>	<p><b>The indicator is fulfilled.</b></p>	<p><i>To balance distribution of doctoral candidates among potential supervisors, and to adjust number of doctoral candidates and their research topics to actual overall research capacity. Even if regulations do allow certain things, and regardless of the motivation for it, it needs to be treated with caution by those who implement such regulations.</i></p>
13.	CPI	<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,</p>	<p><b>The indicator is fulfilled.</b></p>	<p><i>Further focus on research productivity and publishing papers in best international journals for the domain.</i></p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		<p>doctoral thesis advisors shall prove their international visibility within the past five years by their membership on the boards of professional associations, membership in organizing committees of arts events and international competitions, membership on juries or umpire teams in artistic events or international competitions.</p>		
14.	PI *	<p><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>	<p><b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b></p>	<p><i>None.</i></p>
15.	PI *	<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 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.</p>	<p><b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b></p>	<p><i>In order to enroll more doctoral candidates from other institutions, adequate changes would be needed in the process of selection and admission of doctoral students. Also, Doctoral school should be more openly oriented to use English as one of the official languages in order to attract more international doctoral candidates.</i></p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
16.	PI *	<p><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.</p>	<p><b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b></p>	
17.	PI	<p><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%.</p>	<p><b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b></p>	<p><i>When considering the quality of new doctoral candidates, it would be good to reconsider some of the existing criteria for admission and the logic behind.</i></p>
18.	PI	<p><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.</p>	<p><b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b></p>	<p><i>For the benefits of the programme as well as individual doctoral candidates it is recommended to rethink the format of doctoral thesis as well as how to go through the study.</i></p>
19.	PI	<p><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.</p>	<p><b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b></p>	<p><i>In order to prepare better doctoral candidates for different careers (although, still, many PhD holders stay within academia) the Doctoral School should revisit courses that are available and to consider more courses for transferable skills.</i></p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
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>The indicator is fulfilled.</b>	<i>It is highly recommended to fully respect the fact that doctoral study, the third cycle, is very different from the first and second (bachelor and master), and this fact also needs to be reflected in learning outcomes.</i>
21.	PI	<b>B.2.1.4.</b> 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.	<b>The indicator is fulfilled.</b>	<i>None.</i>
22.	CPI	<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>The indicator is fulfilled.</b>	<i>None.</i>
23.	CPI	<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	<b>The indicator is fulfilled.</b>	<i>Based on the facts, the number of students not being able to graduate because of not having papers published, to initiate reconsidering the requirements. Comparative analysis with other fields-domains might be useful, as well as with European university practice in doctoral education.</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		significant original contributions in the respective domain		
24.	PI *	<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><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	None.
25.	PI *	<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><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	None.
26.	PI *	<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 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.	<b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	None.



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

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		the results, there is evidence that an action plan was drafted and implemented.		
29.	<b>CPI</b>	<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> <li>e) the content of training program based on advanced academic studies;</li> <li>f) the academic and scientific profile, thematic areas/research themes of the Doctoral advisors within the domain, as well as their institutional contact data;</li> <li>g) the list of doctoral students within the domain with necessary information (year of registration; advisor);</li> <li>h) information on the standards for developing the doctoral thesis;</li> <li>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.</li> </ul>	<b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	<i>It would be beneficial for the Doctoral School to have all the info in English as well.</i>
30.	<b>PI</b>	<b>C.2.2.1.</b> All doctoral students have free access to one platform providing academic databases relevant to the	<b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	<i>None.</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		doctoral studies domain of their thesis.		
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.	<b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	<i>None.</i>
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.	<b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	<i>None.</i>
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 target at the level of the European Higher Education Area.	<b><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></b>	<i>It would be beneficial to further support mobility, and in particular short-term research in laboratories abroad.</i>

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

## VI. Conclusions and general recommendations

*Doctoral School Psychology and Educational Sciences has shown a high level of compliance with all the given performance indicators, and it is recommended to give a positive evaluation.*

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

*It has been showed that the Doctoral School is well structured and managed, with a sufficient research capacity in terms of people, facilities and infrastructure and funding. Nevertheless, in order to continue further development it would be necessary to revisit some decisions and aspects of functioning, to receive more funding, to improve infrastructure and to enhance internationalisation.*

*General remark is that the system is overregulated and this could easily become a constraint for further development. For future evaluations, and considering the fact that this is the evaluation on a doctoral level, a suggestion would be to conduct the whole evaluation in English.*

*In addition, more on a level of form, suggestion is to align the terminology with common European terminology within the system of doctoral education, such as, doctoral candidate (or doctoral*



*researcher), instead of doctoral student; supervisor, instead of coordinator (or advisor; advisor could be used, but than it has different meaning; co-tutelle programmes etc.)*

## **VII. Annexes**

*The following types of documents shall be attached:*

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