

**Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași**  
**2021**

**Introduction**

I was invited to join to the evaluation team of the online doctoral school evaluation process of the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași as an international evaluator of the Marketing doctoral study program of the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration for the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS). The online evaluation took place between Thursday 9 September and Friday 17 September 2021. Before the evaluation, I received the self-evaluation report of the Marketing domain. My report is following the structure of the indicators.

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>	fulfilled	<p><b>The operation of the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration, including the Marketing domain relies on a system of regulations, procedures and tools covering the whole doctoral educational process.</b></p>
2.	PI	<p><b>A.1.1.2.</b> The doctoral school' Regulation includes mandatory criteria, procedures and</p>	fulfilled	

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		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.		
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>fulfilled</b>	<b>According to the self evaluation report, the university has proper IT system for the educational and research process.</b>
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>fulfilled</b>	
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>fulfilled</b>	<b>It is recommended to maintain the present good performance.</b>
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 individual persons or by legal entities, or who are financially supported through research or institutional / human resources development grants is not less than 20%.	<b>fulfilled</b>	<b>According to the received information, at the time of the evaluation of the Marketing doctoral study program, the score was 36.36%, which is higher than the expected level. In the future, it is suggested to maintain the good level of funding.</b>
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,	<b>not fulfilled</b>	<b>This score is lower than the expected level, in the next period, especially when the virus crisis is going to be over, it is recommended to increase and reach the expected 10% level.</b>

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		publication of specialty papers or other specific forms of dissemination etc.).		
8.	CPI	A.2.1.1. The venues and the material equipment available to the doctoral school enable the research activities in the evaluated domain to be carried out, in line with the assumed mission and objectives (computers, specific software, equipment, laboratory equipment, library, access to 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	fulfilled	According to the self-evaluation report and the received information, the university has proper material bases for the educational and research process. It is also important to point out that from last year, due to the COVID situation, the university, just like other higher education institutions, has started to organize the educational activities online. According to the received information, the university and the doctoral school managed to cope with this atypical situation. On one hand, because of the online solutions the current use and utilization of the research infrastructure is certainly lower than the previous periods, on the other hand, the university must pay a permanent attention to maintain and develop the infrastructure of research and education.
9.	CPI	A.3.1.1. Minimum three doctoral thesis advisors within that doctoral domain, and at least 50% of them (but no less than three) meet the minimum standards of the National Council for Attestation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates (CNATDCU) in force at the time when the evaluation is carried out, which standards are required and mandatory for obtaining the enabling certification.	fulfilled	Doctoral advisors meet with the ARACIS indicators.
10.	PI *	A.3.1.2. At least 50% of all doctoral advisors have a full-time employment contract for an indefinite period with the IOSUD.	fulfilled	4 doctoral advisors in the field of Marketing (57,14%) are tenured in the Department of Management, Marketing and Business Administration within the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration of the university. The other 3 doctoral advisors are retired, currently associate faculty and former tenured faculty at the same institution. It is recommended to keep this employment level that meets the ARACIS indicators.

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11.	PI	<p><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.</p>	fulfilled	<p>Teaching staff and researchers have proper competencies to do their work correctly and have proved expertise in the field of study.</p>
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>	fulfilled	<p>The score is 14.28%, complying to the 20% ARACIS indicator.</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, 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>	fulfilled	<p>Within the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration, the share of doctoral advisors in the field of Marketing who have at least 5 publications indexed Web of Science or ERIH in journals with impact factor or other relevant achievements in the field, contributions at international level that reveal progress in scientific research-development- innovation for the evaluated field is 100%. In the future it is recommended to maintain this excellent level of publication activities.</p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
14.	PI *	<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	fulfilled	The score is over the standards.
15.	PI *	<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.	fulfilled	The ratio between the number of candidates who have competed for admission to the doctoral studies in Marketing during the last five years and who have completed master's studies at other higher education institutions in the country or abroad (11) in the total number of seats financed from the state budget in the field of Marketing (14) over the last five years is 0.786 (above the minimum value of 0.2).Also, the ratio between the number of candidates (25) and the number of seats financed from the state budget (14) over the last five years is 1.786 (above the minimum value of 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.	fulfilled	
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%.	fulfilled	The expelling rate is 4%.
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	fulfilled	The training program curriculum for doctoral students enrolled in the Marketing study domain includes at least three subjects relevant to their training in scientific research, including

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		the research methodology and/or the statistical data processing.		a subject for in-depth study of research methodology, as well as a subject aimed at statistical data processing.
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.	fulfilled	The training program for doctoral students enrolled in the Marketing doctoral domain includes a compulsory subject entitled Ethics and Academic Integrity, which comprises 6 hours of course and 8 hours of seminar.
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.	fulfilled	
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.	fulfilled	Doctoral students enrolled in doctoral studies in Marketing benefit from the guidance of functional guidance commissions.
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.	fulfilled	The ratio between the number of doctoral students enrolled in the evaluated period in doctoral studies in Marketing and the total number of professors/ researchers who provide guidance was 1,714 : 1, lower than the ratio of 3 : 1. It is recommended to meet permanently with the ARACIS standards.
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 significant original contributions in the respective domain	fulfilled	The indicator is met; each of the PhD students who obtained the title of Doctor in Marketing during the evaluated period has written at least one article that has had significant contribution to the Marketing domain.

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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.	fulfilled	The indicator is met, each of the doctoral students who completed their studies during the evaluated period delivered at least one presentation at prestigious international events.
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.	fulfilled	Between 2016-2020, within the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration, 14 doctoral students enrolled in the field of MARKETING completed and publicly defended their doctoral thesis. For each of the doctoral advisors assigned to this field, the number of doctoral theses allocated to a certain scientific specialist from a higher education institution, other than Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, was maximum two (2) in a year for the doctoral theses coordinated by a PhD advisor.
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.	fulfilled	
27.	PI	<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: a) the scientific work of Doctoral advisors;	fulfilled	Reviewing the structure and activities of the quality assurance of the university, these processes operate well, but quality assurance has to become the part of the organizational culture of the institution. The evolution and development of a real organizational culture of quality assurance at every

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		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.		<b>stage of university and doctoral school operation should be in focus.</b>
28.	PI *	<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.	fulfilled	<b>At the level of the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration, the Questionnaire for Assessing the Quality of Doctoral Studies is administered annually. This tool certainly helps to identify the needs of the students at doctoral school level, but it is also recommended to examine the Marketing study program separately.</b>
29.	CPI	<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: 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	fulfilled	<b>The website of the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration is <a href="http://doctorat.feaa.uaic.ro">doctorat.feaa.uaic.ro</a>. The Doctoral School's website also includes sections for foreign students, although here there is much less information. If the internationalization of the doctoral school is a priority in the future, it is recommended to develop the English contents of this website as well.</b>



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		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.	<b>fulfilled</b>	<b>Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași offers doctoral students the opportunity to access wide range of databases – it is suggested to maintain this situation because it is certainly a great help for the doctoral students when they are preparing their thesis.</b>
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>fulfilled</b>	<b>Doctoral students have the possibility to have access to this system.</b>
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>fulfilled</b>	<b>All doctoral students enrolled in the Economics doctoral program have access to the research infrastructure available within IOSUD - Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași. According to the received information, the research facilities are on a good level, it is recommended to maintain the present state and develop if the financial conditions allow.</b>
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>Although these connections are operating quite well, it is recommended to maintain and manage these contracts permanently with the partner institutions and permanently increase the number of students and staff members taking part in mobility activities. Even in the period of COVID, when the personal contacts are more complicated, the doctoral school must pay attention to find the appropriate management of its contacts if the present situation drags on and the online world lasts longer.</b>
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	<b>fulfilled</b>	<b>When the virus crisis is going to be over, after the online world it would be important again to invite experts from abroad who personally visit the</b>

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		invitation of leading experts to deliver courses/lectures for doctoral students.		<b>university and have classes with the doctoral students.</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>fulfilled</b>	<b>In the doctoral school and in the Marketing educational program it would be important to pay permanent attention to the internationalization and attract more students from abroad.</b>

## VI. Conclusions and general recommendations

My report is based on what I have experienced; what I have read and have heard before and during the online visit. Although the present situation, role, and reputation of Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, and the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration, and the Marketing study program is good, the doctoral school should pay enough attention to the permanent changes (number of students, financial stability, changing needs of the potential students, etc.). Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration should permanently invest in the physical and human infrastructure and facilities when own resources, state support or any other funds allow. In the Marketing study program, it is recommended to raise the level of internationalization to strengthen the present, favorable recognition and competitiveness. Parallel with traditional roles, doctoral schools have to adapt to the new needs of the students where permanent improvement of quality have to be in focus, and this type of adaptation needs flexibility and investment in human capital. The Marketing study program has to find its competitive factors with specialization and have to define and find the role and the place in local and international market and attract new potential groups parallel with the traditional markets. If the present pandemic situation drags on for longer time, the doctoral school, just like other higher education institutions, has to pay intensive attention for taking the possible advantages of it and might keep some parts of the online methods when the virus crisis is going to be over.

Finally, I would like to thank to the colleagues of the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration and Marketing study program, and to the evaluation team for the pleasant atmosphere and support during the online evaluation. At last, but not least I would like to thank to ARACIS for giving me the opportunity to participate in this evaluation process in Romania.

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