

The External Evaluation Report of a Doctoral Study Domain

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I. Introduction¹

In this chapter, the following shall be summarized:

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

This report is written in the frames of the institutional evaluation visit - IOSUD / doctoral study domain „Finance” of ”Alexandru Ioan Cuza” (UAIC) University of Iasi. The period of evaluation is 09.09-17.09.2021.

The composition of the domain expert panel is the following:

1	Professor Marius Sorin DINCA Coordinator	Transilvania University of Brasov
2	Prof. STUKALO Nataliia DSc International expert	London School of Business And Finance Online
3	Victor Constantin Iures PhD Student	Craiova University

¹ Each time when applicable the information shall be presented gender-wise.



This report is written by Nataliia Stukalo (international expert) considering the outcomes of the evaluation visit, review of the documents provided, and discussion with the Coordinator and Student Expert.

"Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University (UAIC) of Iasi was established in 1860 and it is the oldest Romanian University. At present it is one of the biggest and academically strongest University in Romania. In 2005 as a result of legislative changes UAIC IOSUD including Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration (SDEEA) replaced IOD-UAIC. Doctoral domain Finance is one of nine domains at the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration which is a separate department within the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. In 2014 the Doctoral School got the certificate of HR Excellence in Research.

There are 51 doctoral thesis advisors, 104 guidance commission members and 152 enrolled PhD students at SDEEA. The number of doctoral thesis advisors at Doctoral domain Finance is 6. The number of available seats and enrolled PhD students at the level of Doctoral School is decreasing (from 51 to 37 students between 2011 and 2020 with the slight increases in 2019 and 2020 to 40 and 42 accordingly). However the number of yearly enrolled Finance PhD students is approximately the same during 2016-2021. Each year 6 students are admitted (with the exception of 2018 when 8 students were admitted and 2017 – 4 students were admitted). It is also noted that all students who applies are admitted (page 28 of the SAR). Currently there are 20 PhD students of all four years of study at Finance domain.

II. Methods used

This chapter will contain the methods and tools used in the external evaluation process, before and during the evaluation visit.

The following methods and tools were used in the external evaluation process: Before the evaluation visit:

- The analysis of the self-assessment report of the doctoral study domain "Finance" and its Annexes;
- The analysis of documents made available by the IOSUD as the response to the panel members' request during the evaluation visit;
- The analysis of documents, data and information available on the IOSUD/Doctoral School(s) website, in electronic format;
- Visiting (in person by coordinator and student member) the buildings included in the institution's property, comprising (indicative and non-exhaustive list, which shall be changed according to the context):
 - classrooms;



- laboratories;
- the institution's library;
- research centers;
- the Career Counselling and Guidance Center;
- lecture halls for students;
- the student residences;
- the student cafeteria;
- sports ground etc.;
- facilities for disabled people.
- Meeting/discussions with doctoral students in the doctoral study domain "Finance";
- Meeting/Discussions with the graduates of the doctoral study schools of UAIC;
- Meeting/Discussions with employers of the graduates in the doctoral study schools of UAIC;
- Meeting/Discussions with the school officials of the Doctoral School in which the doctoral study domain "Finance" is operating;
- Meeting/Discussions with the PhD coordinators in the doctoral study domain "Finance";
- Meeting/discussions with the representatives of the various structures including Ethics Committee, Quality Assurance Unit of the IOSUD/Doctoral School(s) in which the doctoral study domain "Finance" is operating:
 - The Council of the Doctoral School, the University Senate, the Board of Directors, the Quality Assessment and Assurance Commission, the Quality Assurance Department, the Ethics Commission (including with the student representatives of these structures), Research Centers representatives;
 - Application of questionnaires to doctoral students in the doctoral study domain under review.
- SWOT analysis of the Finance doctoral domain.



III. Analysis of ARACIS's performance indicators

Domain A. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

**general description of domain analysis.*

UAIC IOSUD including Finance domain has sufficient institutional capacity including administrative, managerial and financial resources, research infrastructure and high quality human resources. The most performance indicators are fulfilled in the field of institutional capacity, just one issue was identified in performance indicator A.1.3.3 as the minimum 10% of the total amount of doctoral grants should be 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.)

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

The criterion A.1 is mainly met with some room for improvement. There is evidence that documents, procedures and processes are in line with the national legislation and institutional regulations. The IT system and software including antiplagiarism are appropriate. The financial resources are sufficient and include some additional resources including insitutional and individual grants. From the other side, performance indicator A.1.3.3 requires special attention at insitutional lelvel. There are some other recommendations included into specific PIs and chapter V of this report.

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.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

The standard A.1.1 is met and effective functioning mechanisms provided for the specific legislation are being implemented at UAIC IOSUD and Doctoral School of Finance.

Performance Indicator A.1.1.1. *The existence of specific regulations and their application at the level of the Doctoral School of the respective university doctoral study domain:*

- (a) the internal regulations of the Doctoral School;*
- (b) the Methodology for conducting elections for the position of director of the Council of doctoral school (CSD), as well as elections by the students of their representative in CSD and the evidence of their conduct;*
- (c) the Methodologies for organizing and conducting doctoral studies (for the admission of doctoral students, for the completion of doctoral studies);*



d) the existence of mechanisms for recognizing the status of a Doctoral advisor and the equivalence of the doctoral degree obtained abroad;

e) functional management structures (Council of the doctoral school), giving as well proof of the regularity of meetings;

f) the contract for doctoral studies;

g) internal procedures for the analysis and approval of proposals regarding the training for doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The relevant specific regulations exist and are applied at the level of UAIC IOSUD including SDEEA and Finance Doctoral domain. The documents are presented in the Annex 16, 17, 18, 4, 19, 20, 21, 22,23,24, 6 of the self-assessment report (SAR). According to the legal provisions in force, doctoral studies are conducted on the basis of their own regulations, adopted by the Senate of "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași.

Recommendations: No specific recommendations

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.

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Annex 6 of the SAR and the review of the SDEEA's web site are the evidence that SDEEA's regulation (The Regulation of the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration) includes all mandatory provisions related to criteria, procedures and standards concerning the issues specified in Art.17, para.5 of H.G.681/2011.

Recommendations: This indicator is fulfilled, however more efforts could be put in order to provide students with additional guidelines and explanations of the established policies and procedures. Potentially the Student Support Office could be created and responsible for this function.

The indicator is fulfilled.



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

**general description of the standard analysis.*

Standard A.1.2 is also met and there is evidence IOSUD and Finance doctoral domain have sufficient logistical resources important for conducting doctoral research and carrying out the doctoral studies' mission.

Performance Indicator A.1.2.1. *The existence and effectiveness of an appropriate IT system to keep track of doctoral students and their academic background.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

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The UAIC IOSUD has appropriate IT system to keep track of doctoral students and their academic background. The communication with students and professors, Annex 25 of SAR, as well as in person visit of the panel Coordinator to the University confirms there is Integrated informatics system for the students' professional activities management within the context of the changes triggered by the Bologna process and financed by the Ministry of Education and Research. This integrated informatics system has constantly been updated by the specialists working at the Department of Statistics and Computerization at IOSUD-UAIC. Besides IOSUD-UAIC is involved into the projects related to the implementation of the Official Academic Record across the entire country financed by CNFIS through the Institutional Development Fund.

Recommendations: No specific recommendations.

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.*

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In 2006 IOSUD-UAIC, has implemented a special module within the eLearning platform Blackboard –Safe Assign. The licenses to use this application was extended yearly (the evidence is provided in the SAR Annex 28). In 2018 eLearning platform based on Moodle was introduced and now the Turnitin application is used (evidence of annual purchase is provided in the SAR Annex 29). Both teachers and students have access to the antiplagiarism software and it was confirmed during the interviews with students and supervisors. All students who took part in the additional student survey conducted by the evaluation panel confirmed that they have either good or very good access to an electronic system.



Recommendations: It is recommended to guide students to check all their assignments, articles, drafts through the available Turnitin software. The similarity reports could be used as learning tools to avoid any potential academic integrity issues and to enhance academic integrity culture.

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.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

The most performance indicators within standard A.1.3 are fulfilled and essentially the UAIC IOSUD uses the financial resources in appropriate way, however the distribution of the revenues obtained from doctoral studies should consider at least 10% to be spent to reimburse professional training expenses of doctoral students.

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.*

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The Finance doctoral domain demonstrates research and professional development grants. Pages 61-62 of the SAR include detailed information about the grants available including 6 specific grants specific to Finance domain and conducted by its PhD coordinators.

The interview with students and the student survey demonstrate they are mainly satisfied with the grant opportunities with minor exceptions. In one case student (1 out of 9 students participating survey) reports the lack of financial support.

Recommendations: There is appropriate performance, however it would be even to diversify the geography of grants – they are mainly Romanian and EU, but would be better to have from all over the world. Besides there is always room for improvement here and more professional development grants for professors and students could be provided.

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%.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

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9 PhD students of Finance Doctoral Domain have benefited, for a period of at least six months, from sources of funding other than government funding, through scholarships and grants. It makes 30% of the total number of PhD students (9 out of 30), so indicator is fulfilled.

According to the student survey conducted by evaluation panel 6 students confirmed they had good opportunity to participate mobility exchange and other internship during doctoral studies. 2 students (22% of the respondents) mentioned lack of such opportunities.

Recommendations: It is suggested to diversify the funding sources available for students and introduce an action plan to attract grants and scholarships from business environment, employers and the other companies, graduates, the other stakeholders.

It's also important to make the information about grant opportunities clear and available for students.

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.).*

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This indicator is partially fulfilled at institutional level. There is evidence UAIC-IOSUD puts efforts to progress in this area supporting students with funding participation in the conferences, workshops, research internships, etc. For instance, SDEAA applies BECA-UAIC Decision no.D2 of 07.06.2018, through which each doctoral student

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



annually can benefit from amount of 3,000 RON for participation in prestigious scientific conferences.

According to the student survey results 5 out of 9 students confirm they are very satisfied by financial support by UAIC, 3 more students are satisfied by a large extent. Only one student out of 9 is not satisfied.

The most students confirmed the overall good level of satisfaction with the financial support during the interviews.

Regardless all efforts and significant progress in this area, the overall amount is less the 10% required.

Recommendations: It is recommended to ensure meeting this performance indicator and increase amount of doctoral grants to reimburse professional training expenses of doctoral students. This funding should be provided directly to the students addressing their specific individual needs associated with their PhD research.

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

Criterion A.2. Research infrastructure

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

Criterion A.2 is met. UAIC IOSUD in general and Finance Doctoral domain in particular have sufficient research infrastructure, adequate venues, facilities, equipment to conduct research in the field of international business and economics.

Standard A.2.1. The IOSUD has a modern research infrastructure to support the conduct of doctoral studies' specific activities.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

Standard A.2.1. is met and UAIC IOSUD has adequate research infrastructure to support the conduct of Finance 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.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

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The provided materials, SAR, interview with students and PhD Supervisors, and in person visit of the panel Coordinator to the Doctoral School confirm that the venues



and the material equipment are available to students and research infrastructure and research services are appropriate and meet requirements. The detailed explanation and evidence is provided in SAR.

Besides student survey conducted by the expert panel confirms the following: the students are satisfied with the access to international databases for consulting bibliographic sources in the field (8 students out of 9 are satisfied or very satisfied; one student is satisfied to an average extent); 6 students out of 9 are also satisfied and very satisfied with access to economic agents and research institutes; the most students are also happy with the laboratories, research spaces, other facilities (7 students are satisfied and very satisfied; 2 students are satisfied to an average extent). As a result of meeting with the Director of the Centre for Research in Finance (<https://www.feaa.uaic.ro/crf/index.php>) it is confirmed that this Centre has core mission to support of scientific research in corporate and public finance alike, both theoretical and applied. The members of the Centre (researchers and students) can benefit from it.

Recommendations: It is recommended to enlarge and scale research center, to expand its activities, involve more international researchers and experts from the other fields, to establish interdisciplinary and crossborder research projects. The research centers could potentially merge in order to provide PhD students with more opportunities, wider access to experts in different topics, research grant opportunities, data basis, facilities, etc

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion A.3. Quality of Human Resources

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

The Criterion A.3 is fulfilled and there is evidence of high quality of human resources of the Finance doctoral domain. The key performance indicators are fulfilled.

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

**general description of the standard analysis.*

There is evidence of highly qualified supervisors and other staff at the level of Finance doctoral domain.

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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

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All six PhD Supervisors meet the minimum CNATDCU standards mandatory for obtaining the certificate of qualification in the field of Finance at the time of preparation of this evaluation report. The evidence is provided in the SAR Annex 10. Besides page 71 of the SAR includes table with supervisors publication scores and citation scores which are appropriate.

Recommendations: No specific recommendations,

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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

5 PhD supervisors (which makes 83,33%) are tenured at the Department of Finance, Money and Public Administration of the UAIC-IOSUD (the evidence is provided in the SAR Annex 8). One more Supervisor has recently retired and currently associate faculty and former tenured faculty.

Recommendations: It is recommended to develop a strategy to attract foreign PhD Advisors as a full-time employees. Besides it is worth to recruit more young PhD Supervisors.

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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The Study subjects are based on advanced higher education studies. The teaching staff is highly skilled and mostly they are researchers who are PhD Supervisors and professors/associate professors in the field.

It should also be mentioned that in the teaching of compulsory and optional subjects are also involved PhD supervisors in the field of Finance. The details are provided in the SAR Annex 7 and in the tables on the page 72-73-74.



The student survey confirms students consider the specialised disciplines included into the training program are relevant for the research undertaking (7 students out of 9 are satisfied and highly satisfied, 2 more students are satisfied to an average extent).

Recommendations: It is recommended to provide PhD Supervisors with the opportunity to update and improve their supervision and teaching skills through relevant trainings regularly. For instance, "Social Media tools in modern teaching", "Motivate your students effectively", "PhD class management", "Andragogy: How to teach adults in efficient way", "Conflict Resolution", "Integrated and contextualized learning", "Problem-based and project-based learning" etc

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator *A.3.1.4. *The percentage of doctoral thesis advisors who concomitantly coordinate more than 8 doctoral students, but no more than 12, who are themselves studying in doctoral programs³ does not exceed 20%.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

There is evidence that number of students per supervisor varies from 1 to 7 and there are no more than 8 students per supervisor at Finance Doctoral Domain. The relevant evidence is provided in SAR in the related section PI A.3.1.4.

Recommendations: No specific recommendations.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

**general description of the standard analysis.*

The Finance PhD Supervisors are internationally visible and standard A.3.2 is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator A.3.2.1. *At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in the evaluated domain have at least 5 Web of Science- or ERIH-indexed publications in magazines of impact, or other achievements of relevant significance for that domain, including international-level contributions that indicate progress in scientific research - development - innovation for the evaluated domain. The aforementioned doctoral thesis advisors enjoy international awareness within the past five years, consisting of: membership on scientific boards of international publications and conferences; membership on boards of international professional associations; guests in conferences or expert groups working abroad, or membership on doctoral defense commissions at universities abroad or co-leading with*

³ 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.



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.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The materials and documents provided confirm that all Finance PhD supervisors are internationally visible and enjoy international awareness. All of them have at least 5 publications indexed Web of Science or ERIH in journals with impact factor or other achievements presented in the SAR Annex 11. Number of WoS articles is from 11 to 58 per supervisor and scopus citations from 35 to 371. There is also evidence of the other forms of visibility of Finance PhD Supervisors (evidence is on the page 76 of the SAR).

Recommendations: It is recommended to increase number of PhD Supervisors' publications outside the Europe and to diversify the types of PhD supervisors international presence in such areas as membership in boards of international professional associations and in doctoral defense commissions abroad

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.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

All Finance PhD supervisors are active within the past five years, obtaining a score higher than the standards according to the CNATDCU minimum standards in force and mandatory for obtaining the habilitation certificate in the field of economic sciences (the details are provided in the SAR Annex 10).

Recommendations: No specific recommendations.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

**general description of domain analysis.*



The major performance indicators related to educational effectiveness are fulfilled.

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

Criterion B.1. is fulfilled and the quality and diversity of candidates is good and meets key requirements.

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.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

Standard B.1.1. is essentially met and there is some evidence of appropriate capacity of the Finance doctoral domain to attract candidates outside the UAIC, however further improvements are expected in this area according to the recommendations provided.

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.*

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There is evidence that the first indicator (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) meets the minimum requirement and it is 1,29.

However the number of master program graduates from other national or foreign higher education institutions enrolled was zero in 2016, 2017, 2020. Just one student from outside university was admitted in 2019 and 2 students – in 2018.

So, the second indicator (0.2 ratio) is not fulfilled and it is important to pay attention to this indicator and develop action plan to improve in this area.

Recommendations: It is recommended to develop strategy and action plan to attract more foreign students and students from the other Romanian universities in order to meet 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 at least at the minimum level of 0.2.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

**general description of the standard analysis.*

The standard B.1.2 is met. The admission process is transparent and based on the relevant selection criteria. The students demonstrate appropriate 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.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

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The admission criteria are relevant and include academic and research performance, scientific interest, publications (SAR annex 18). The students during the interview with evaluation panel confirmed the admission process is fair and appropriate.

It is noted that all students who apply for the Finance Doctoral Domain are admitted which is quite concerning and requires special attention. This can be partly explained by the low demand and overall decrease of young people who wish to proceed their studies at PhD level.

Recommendations: The relevant policy to increase attractiveness of the Finance Doctoral Domain could be developed. This may include advertising at national and international level, using graduates as potential ambassadors of the Finance Study Domain, promoting research activities and research-based decision making approach.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator B.1.2.2. The expelling rate, including renouncement / dropping out of doctoral students 3, respectively 4, years after admission⁴ does not exceed 30%.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

⁴ 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.



- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The discussion with Doctoral domain representatives and the materials provided confirm that drop out rate in 2017, 2018, 2021 was at zero level and in 2018 and 2019 – 25%. The indicator is not critical, however considering the low number of students at the Finance Doctoral Domain should be paid attention to/

Recommendations: It is suggested to develop students' retention policy which can be function of the Student Support Office/Service.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion B.2. The content of doctoral programs

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

The standard B.2.1 is essentially met, however the issues related to topic "Intellectual property" should be considered and improved.

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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

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Annex 7 of the SAR provides information on the following disciplines relevant to the scientific research training of doctoral students:

- Epistemology;
- Scientific research methodology;
- Research and Analysis Methods for Qualitative Data and Research and Analysis Methods for Quantitative Data;
- Ethics of scientific research;
- Academic Writing.

There is evidence that these disciplines provide students with in-depth understanding of the research methodology and statistical data processing.

Recommendations: The syllabuses of the courses delivered could be updated with more recently published peer-reviewed articles, up-to-date academic literature presenting the modern advanced research in the field of finance in English.



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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

There is one discipline "Ethics and academic integrity" which delivered to all PhD students and covers key ethics issues. The student survey outcomes demonstrates that students consider the Ethics discipline is relevant for their research and elaboration of doctoral thesis (8 out of 9 students agree to a very large extent and one more student agrees to large extent).

The topics related to intellectual property are not covered in sufficient way.

Recommendations: It is recommended to introduce a separate course or at least some themes within the other disciplines devoted to intellectual property in scientific research, its characteristics, the legal and social means developed to encourage and control it, types of intellectual property, violation of intellectual property, copyright, patent and trademark regimes, licensing and trade secrets.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator B.2.1.3. *The IOSUD has mechanisms to ensure that the academic training program based on advanced university studies addresses „the learning outcomes”, specifying the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy that doctoral students should acquire after completing each discipline or through the research activities⁵.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The learning outcomes are ensured as a result of delivery of disciplines within Finance doctoral program. Students gain relevant knowledge, skills, competencies associated with researchers' responsibility and autonomy. The relevant evidence is demonstrated via the materials provided, syllabuses of the disciplines as well as as a result of interview with students during the evaluation visit.

Student survey demonstrates that 100% students strongly believe that it is necessary to introduce academic writing course.

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



Recommendations: It is suggested to introduce some courses (elective or additional (non-credit) to meet students need and ensure their advanced competencies related to scientific research training at PhD level such as “Research Fundraising”, “Advanced Academic Writing” “How to Publish in International Peer-reviewed Journals”. Besides such courses as “The Reflective Practitioner”, “Action Research”, “Communicating Your Research”, “Leadership: Doctoral Theory and Practice” could be useful for research students.

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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution’s documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution’s documents and the evaluation visit itself

Guidance commissions at Finance Doctoral Domain include doctoral advisors and/or professors with experience in the field of finance. They advice and advice students, provide feedback on their research activities and scientific papers. This allows PhD candidates to complete their doctoral thesis in the suggested timeframes, publish scientific articles and participate with presentations in various scientific events in collaboration with one of the members of the guidance commission.

Students confirmed via student survey that they benefit from the support of the members of the guidance committee for their research activity and doctoral thesis writing. 100% students participating survey strongly agree with this point.

Recommendations: International experts and practitioners with PhD could be engaged into the work of such commissions.

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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution’s documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution’s documents and the evaluation visit itself

According to the data provided by the Finance doctoral domain and documents presented in the SAR at the level of the doctoral field Finance the ratio between PhD students and the number of staff/researchers engaged in advising is 1:1, so this performance indicator is fulfilled.

Recommendations: No specific recommendations.



The indicator is fulfilled.

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

The most indicators relevant to criterion B.3 are fulfilled with one exception – PI B.3.2.2. The recommendations provided below.

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

**general description of the standard analysis.*

The standard B.3.1 is fulfilled. Doctoral students are research and publication active.

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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The following papers have been randomly selected and reviewed:

1. Mihai Mărginean, Adina Dornean, „[Effects analysis in abuse of dominance cases in European Union](#)”, Journal of Public Administration, Finance and Law (JOPAF), Issue 10/2016, 212-221
2. Andrieș, A.M., Sprincean, N. , 2021, [Cyclical behaviour of systemic risk in the banking sector](#) Applied Economics, 53(13), pp. 1463–1497
3. Andrieș, A.M., Nistor, S., Ongena, S., Sprincean, N., 2020, [On Becoming an O-SII \(“Other Systemically Important Institution”\)](#) Journal of Banking and Finance, 111, 105723
4. Andrieș, A.M., Nistor, S., Sprincean, N., 2020, [The impact of central bank transparency on systemic risk—Evidence from Central and Eastern Europe](#), Research in International Business and Finance, 51, 100921
5. Căpraru, B., Ilnatov, I., Pintilie, N.-L., 2020, [Competition and diversification in the European Banking Sector](#), Research in International Business and Finance, 51, 100963

These five selected papers have been reviewed and there is evidence of their original contribution to the finance field.



Recommendations: No specific recommendations.

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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

This performance indicator is fully fulfilled and even substantially exceeds the requirements. All PhD students have participated in at least one international scientific event. The full list of 72 presentations is provided at pages 87-91 of the SAR.

Recommendations: It is recommended to ensure even wider geographic diversification of the students' research presentations including Asian and American events as well as with the other countries all over the world.

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.*

**general description of the standard analysis.*

The Financial Doctoral Domain engages external researchers and experts, however the performance in the PI B.3.2.2 should be improved

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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

There is evidence the external specialists are engaged into the work with PhD students at Finance Doctoral Domain. During the evaluation period 2016-2020 15 doctoral students enrolled in the Finance study domain have completed and publicly defended their doctoral thesis. The number of doctoral theses allocated to one specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the UAIC IOSUD was maximum two according to the data provided in the SAR.



Recommendation: It is recommended to invite more foreign researchers and specialists into the PhD defence commissions.

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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

15 doctoral students have obtained the title of doctor in the last five years. All doctoral theses were allocated to specialists coming from a higher educational institution other than the UAIC.

However there is evidence that one external specialist member (Dr.Ventilla) was allocated 6 out of 15 doctoral students who defended their doctoral thesis. This makes 40% which is concerning indicator to be paid attention to.

Recommendations: It is strongly recommended to pay attention to this performance indicator fulfillment and to engage more outside scientific specialists including foreign researchers into the PhD defence commissions.

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

The internal quality assurance system exists at UAIC IOSUD and quality management is in line with requirements and meets major expectations.

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.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

There is an institutional framework and relevant procedures to collect students' feedback. The standard C.1.1. is met.



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.*
 - description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*
 - analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

The Finance Doctoral Domain in particular and UAIC IOSUD in general demonstrate the continuous development of the evaluation process and its internal quality assurance following a procedure developed and applied at the doctoral school level. All assessment criteria including scientific work of PhD advisors, PhD students, research infrastructure, social and academic services, relevant procedures and policies are being constantly reviewed and improved. The approach to SAR development is evidence for this. The SAR is written in self-reflective manner. The meetings with the Finance Doctoral Domain and Quality Assurance Council representatives demonstrate the self-critical and self-reflective approach and actions to improve constantly.

At UAIC IOSUD level some documents and regulations were approved and implemented, among them "Operational Procedure regarding the evaluation and internal monitoring of the doctoral schools", "The Methodology of Evaluation of Doctoral University Studies", "The Institutional Regulation for the Organization and Functioning of Doctoral University Studies", "The Regulation of Operation of the Doctoral School", besides their implementation is supported with "The Strategic Plan of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration". These documents are provided in the SAR annexes and at the UAIC IOSUD website.

So, there is evidence of continuous development of the internal quality assurance, documents and all the processes.

Recommendations: It is recommended to widely engage the employers and graduates into the quality assurance process at UAIC IOSUD level. For instance, it is worth to diversify the types of surveys conducted and develop programme-related questionnaire for employers and graduates to collect their specific feedback in order to consider it for the programme improvement.



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.*

- *description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

- *analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself*

The feedback is collected from students on the annual basis at the level of the Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration through the student questionnaire. The outcomes of the survey are considered in the strategic plan and in the SDEAA Reports (some evidence is provided in Annex 5 of the SAR). During the meeting with students it was noted that there are examples when the course and a teacher was replaced to address the students concerns expressed through the surveys and general non-satisfaction. So, there is evidence of effective mechanisms to enable feedback from doctoral students.

The evaluation panel has also conducted the independent student survey and 100% students participating this survey confirmed they are very satisfied with the relationships with their supervisors.

Recommendations: The suggestion is to conduct students surveys after each particular course before marking (ensuring full anonymity) as well as ask for feedback through general surveys after the defence of the PhD dissertation and a result of the study program completion. The outcomes of the survey should be discussed at all levels (by the supervisors, departments, FINANCE domain, IOSUD, UAIC) in order to better understand student's needs not only directly related to the research work, but also their psychological, financial, social, logistics, infrastructure, and other needs as well as their feedback on different services provided by the UNiversity. It is also important to inform the students how their feedback was considered and actioned by the Doctoral School. There is evidence from practice that if students see how their feedback is considered and helps to improve the processes, the students response rate and engagement into the quality assurance process increase.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

There is evidence of fulfillment of the criterion C.2. The UAIC IOSUD and Finance doctoral domain ensure transparency and accessibility of the information for all stakeholders.



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

**general description of the standard analysis.*

The standard C.2.1. is fulfilled and UAIC IOSUD web-site provides all interested parties with relevant information.

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.
 - description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
 - analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The website of the UAIC IOSUD is well organized and includes all required information of public interest and the materials of interest to doctoral students. It's also important to note that this information is available not only in Romanian, but also in English (<https://www.uaic.ro/en/office-doctoral-studies/>) and in some other languages.

Recommendations: No specific recommendations.

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.

**general description of the standard analysis.*

The standard C.2.2 is met and there is evidence UAIC IOSUD provides students with access to the resources needed for doctoral 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.



- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The students participating the meeting with the evaluation panel confirmed that they have free access to academic databases relevant to the Finance doctoral studies domain including Science Direct Freedom Collection, Scopus, SciFinder(CAS), MathSciNet, and the others. They also have access to all sources in the "Mihai Eminescu" Central University Library in Iasi as well as to the such sources as Springer Link Journals, ProQuestCentral, Emerald Journals, Science Journals, Thompson Reuters, Oxford Journals, SAGE Journals HHS Collection, EBSCO, Wiley Journals etc. as well as to the ORBIS and Bank Focus databases that contain financial data. The evaluation panel has also conducted student survey and 8 students out of 9 are satisfied and very satisfied with the free access to the international databases and other sources.

Recommendations: No specific recommendations.

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.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The doctoral students have free access upon request to an electronic system for verifying the degree of similarity with other existing scientific work. It was confirmed by the students during the meeting with evaluation panle and through additional student survey (all students participating the survey confirmed this fact).

Recommendations: It is recommended to encourage students to check all their papers including assignments, articles, drafted chapters of the dissertation, etc.to check for similarity.

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.

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself
- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself



The UAIC IOSUD have all relevant facilities and research infrastructure for Finance doctoral students. The Finance Research Centre platform, facilities, and other resources are also available to the students. They have free access to this infrastructure and they are satisfied with it. It was confirmed during the meeting of students with evaluation panel.

Recommendations: No specific recommendations.

The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled.

Criterion C.3. Internationalization

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

There is evidence of fulfillment of the criterion C.3 with some areas for improvement.

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

**general description of the standard analysis.*

The standard C.3.1 is fulfilled. There is an internationalization strategy at IOSUD level and it is applied to enhance 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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The UAIC has 845 agreements with 386 universities in 31 European countries. Within the evaluation period (5 years) 68 interinstitutional collaboration agreements have been concluded with universities and research institutions. These agreements form the basis and framework for PhD students and supervisors mobility, scientific collaboration, teaching and learning. The Doctoral School of Economics and Business Administration has concluded mobility agreements with 25 foreign universities abroad. Students have participated the Erasmus Program (4 students), Fulbright Student Award (doctoral student SPRINCE ANNICU). 15 PhD students in the field of FINANCE have participated the conferences and other international scientific events abroad.



Recommendations: More diversified forms of students' international mobility such as summer schools, double diploma programs, trainings, and the other could be used. Besides it is worth to make geographical diversification of the students' mobility.

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.*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

The SAR in section PI C.3.1.2 presents data on researchers and lecturers from Portugal, Canada, Poland, Spain, France, UK, the Netherlands, Norway, Australia who either delivered lectures or participated other events and students benefited from their presence (including online communication).

Recommendations: It is suggested to employ foreign PhD supervisor or/and lecturer in order to wider involve them into the Finance Doctoral Domain activities.

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.).*

- description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

- analysis of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself

There is evidence internationalization of activities carried out during the doctoral studies is supported by UAIC IOSUD and it is one of the priorities of the Doctoral School. There is also one international student from Ghana enrolled.

Recommendations: It is recommended to include more foreign experts into the doctoral, guidance and advisory committees. Besides it is important to develop action plan to attract more international students.

The indicator is fulfilled.

IV. SWOT Analysis

<p><u>Strengths:</u></p> <p>- the strengths identified throughout the report will be resumed as part of the indicators' analysis. Other general strengths that do not fall within a particular indicator may be formulated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-reflective approach and ability to quickly absorb best practices, implement recommendations and improve the study program; - High level of research excellence of supervisors and PhD students; - Good relationships between students and supervisors and continued research relations among them 	<p><u>Weaknesses:</u></p> <p>- the weaknesses identified throughout the report will be resumed as part of the indicators' analysis. Other general weaknesses that do not fall within a particular indicator may be formulated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small number of PhD Students admitted to the Finance Programme; - Lack of regular trainings to develop and improve supervision and teaching skills for PhD coordinators and lecturers; - Non-sufficient funding to support additional students' training, mobility and research dissemination needs
<p><u>Opportunities:</u></p> <p>- possible lines of action for the development of the institution under review shall be identified;</p> <p>- examples of opportunities: a favorable economic environment in the proximity of the assessed institution, the uniqueness of the study programs and their relevance to the local/national market, the overall attractiveness of the study programs etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engaging graduates into the quality assurance processes and procedures as well as into the promotion of the doctoral domain; - Strengthening strategic partnership between doctoral domain and corporate and business employers, their engagement into the quality assurance processes and procedures - Enhancing international partnerships, wider mobility opportunities, research internationalization (joint PhD supervision, stable interschool connections and scaling of the research centers activities) 	<p><u>Threats:</u></p> <p>- the possible causes of the deficient aspects (the causes of the identified weaknesses), which are practically the threats to the proper functioning of the institution, shall be identified;</p> <p>- besides, there may be external threats, such as: the inopportune economic environment in the proximity of the assessed institution, the conduct of low attractiveness study programs for both candidates and the labor market etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decreasing number of potential candidates who are interested to be admitted to the PhD Programme and 'brain drain' risk; - Continuing global pandemic and its influence on the foreign students' admission, students' mobility and other activities; - High competition among similar doctoral schools in Romania and at European level.

V. Overview of judgments awarded and of the recommendations

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
1.	PI	<p>A.1.1.1. The existence of specific regulations and their application at the level of the Doctoral School of the respective university doctoral study domain:</p> <p>a) the internal regulations of the Doctoral School;</p> <p>b) the Methodology for conducting elections for the position of director of the Council of doctoral school (CSD), as well as elections by the students of their representative in CSD and the evidence of their conduct;</p> <p>c) the Methodologies for organizing and conducting doctoral studies (for the admission of doctoral students, for the completion of doctoral studies);</p> <p>d) the existence of mechanisms for recognizing the status of a Doctoral advisor and the equivalence of the doctoral degree obtained abroad;</p> <p>e) functional management structures (Council of the doctoral school), giving as well proof of the regularity of meetings;</p> <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	No specific recommendations
2.	PI	<p>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.</p>	Fulfilled	<p>This indicator is fulfilled, however more efforts could be put in order to provide students with additional guidelines and explanations of the established policies and procedures. The Student Support Office could be created and responsible for this function.</p>
3.	PI	<p>A.1.2.1. The existence and effectiveness of an appropriate IT system to keep track of doctoral students and their academic background.</p>	Fulfilled	No specific recommendations
4.	PI	<p>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.</p>	Fulfilled	<p>It is recommended to guide students to check all their assignments, articles, drafts through the existing software. The similarity reports could be used as learning tools to avoid any potential academic integrity issues.</p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
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	There is appropriate performance, however it would be even to diversify the geography of grants – they are mainly Romanian and EU, but would be better to have from all over the world. Besides there is always room for improvement here and more professional development grants for professors and students could be provided.
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	It is suggested to diversify the funding sources available for students and introduce an action plan to attract grants and scholarships from business environment, employers and the other companies, graduates, the other stakeholders. It's also important to make the information about grant opportunities clear and available for students.
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.).	Partially fulfilled	It is recommended to ensure meeting this performance indicator and increase amount of doctoral grants to reimburse professional training expenses of doctoral students. This funding should be provided directly to the students addressing their specific individual needs associated with their PhD research.
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	Fulfilled	It is recommended to enlarge and scale research center, to expand its activities, involve more international researchers and experts from the other fields, to establish interdisciplinary and crossborder research projects. The research centers could potentially merge in order to provide PhD students with more opportunities, wider access to experts in different topics, research grant opportunities, data basis, facilities, etc.

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		developed within the past 5 years will be presented distinctly		
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	No specific recommendations
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	It is recommended to develop a strategy to attract foreign PhD Advisors as a full-time employees. Besides it is worth to recruit more young PhD Supervisors.
11.	PI	A.3.1.3. The study subjects in the education program based on advanced higher education studies pertaining to the doctoral domain are taught by teaching staff or researchers who are doctoral thesis advisors / certified doctoral thesis advisors, professors / CS I or lecturer / CS II, with proved expertise in the field of the study subjects they teach, or other specialists in the field who meet the standards established by the institution in relation with the aforementioned teaching and research functions, as provided by the law.	Fulfilled	It is recommended to provide PhD Supervisors with the opportunity to update and improve their supervision and teaching skills through relevant trainings regularly. For instance, "Social Media tools in modern teaching", "Motivate your students effectively", "PhD class management", "Andragogy: How to teach adults in efficient way", "Conflict Resolution", "Integrated and contextualized learning", "Problem-based and project-based learning" etc
12.	PI *	A.3.1.4. The percentage of doctoral thesis advisors who concomitantly coordinate more than 8 doctoral students, but no more than 12, who are themselves studying in doctoral programs does not exceed 20%.	Fulfilled	No specific recommendations
13.	CPI	A.3.2.1. At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in the evaluated domain have at least 5 Web of Science- or ERIH-indexed publications in magazines of impact, or other achievements of relevant significance for that domain, including international-level contributions that indicate progress in scientific research - development - innovation for the evaluated domain. The aforementioned doctoral thesis advisors enjoy international awareness within the past five years,	Fulfilled	It is recommended to increase number of PhD Supervisors' publications outside the Europe and to diversify the types of PhD supervisors international presence in such areas as membership in boards of international professional associations and in doctoral defense commissions abroad.

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		<p>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>		
14.	PI *	<p>A.3.2.2. At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in a specific doctoral study domain continue to be active in their scientific field, and acquire at least 25% of the score requested by the minimal CNATDCU standards in force at the time of the evaluation, which are required and mandatory for acquiring their enabling certificate, based on their scientific results within the past five years</p>	Fulfilled	No specific recommendations
15.	PI *	<p>B.1.1.1. The ratio between the number of graduates of masters' programs of other higher education institutions, national or foreign, who have enrolled for the doctoral admission contest within the past five years and the number of seats funded by the state budget, put out through contest within the doctoral domain is at least 0.2 or the ratio between the number of candidates within the past five years and the number of seats funded by the state budget put out through contest within the doctoral studies domain is at least 1,2.</p>	Fulfilled	<p>It is recommended to develop strategy and action plan to attract more foreign students and students from the other Romanian universities in order to meet 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 at least at the minimum level of 0.2.</p>
16.	PI *	<p>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.</p>	Fulfilled	<p>The relevant policy to increase attractiveness of the Finance Doctoral Domain could be developed. This may include advertising at national and international level, using graduates as potential ambassadors of the Finance</p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		Interviewing the candidate is compulsory, as part of the admission procedure.		Study Domain, promoting research activities and research-based decision making approach.
17.	PI	B.1.2.2. The expelling rate, including renouncement / dropping out of doctoral students 3, respectively 4, years after admission does not exceed 30%.	Fulfilled	It is suggested to develop students' retention policy which can be function of the Student Support Office/Service.
18.	PI	B.2.1.1. The training program based on advanced academic studies includes at least 3 disciplines relevant to the scientific research training of doctoral students; at least one of these disciplines is intended to study in-depth the research methodology and/or the statistical data processing.	Fulfilled	The syllabuses of the courses delivered could be updated with more recently published peer-reviewed articles, up-to-date academic literature presenting the modern advanced research in the field of finance in English.
19.	PI	B.2.1.2. At least one discipline is dedicated to Ethics and Intellectual Property in scientific research or there are well-defined topics on these subjects within a discipline taught in the doctoral program.	Fulfilled	It is strongly recommended to introduce a separate course or at least some themes within the other disciplines devoted to intellectual property in scientific research, its characteristics, the legal and social means developed to encourage and control it, types of intellectual property, violation of intellectual property, copyright, patent and trademark regimes, licensing and trade secrets.
20.	PI	B.2.1.3. The IOSUD has mechanisms to ensure that the academic training program based on advanced university studies addresses „the learning outcomes”, specifying the knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy that doctoral students should acquire after completing each discipline or through the research activities.	Fulfilled	It is suggested to introduce some courses (elective or additional (non-credit) to meet students need and ensure their advanced competencies related to scientific research training at PhD level such as “Research Fundrising”, “Advanced Academic Writing” “How to Publish in International Peer-reviewed Journals”. Besides such courses as “The Reflective Practitioner”, “Action Research”, “Communicating Your Research”, “Leadership: Doctoral Theory and Practice” could be useful for research students.
21.	PI	B.2.1.4. All along the duration of the doctoral training, doctoral students in the domain receive counselling/guidance from functional guidance commissions, which is reflected in written guidance and feedback or regular meeting.	Fulfilled	International experts and practitioners with PhD could be engaged into the work of such commissions

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
22.	CPI	B.2.1.5. For a doctoral study domain, the ratio between the number of doctoral students and the number of teaching staff/researchers providing doctoral guidance must not exceed 3:1.	Fulfilled	No specific recommendations
23.	CPI	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	Fulfilled	No specific recommendations
24.	PI *	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.	Fulfilled	It is recommended to ensure even wider geographic diversification of the students' research presentations including Asian and American events as well as with the other countries all over the world.
25.	PI *	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.	Fulfilled	It is recommended to invite more foreign researchers and specialists into the PhD defence commissions.
26.	PI *	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.	Partially fulfilled	It is strongly recommended to pay attention to this performance indicator fulfillment and to engage more outside scientific specialists including foreign researchers into the PhD defence commissions.

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
27.	PI	<p>C.1.1.1. The Doctoral school in the respective university study domain shall demonstrate the continuous development of the evaluation process and its internal quality assurance following a procedure developed and applied at the level of the IOSUD, the following assessed criteria being mandatory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the scientific work of Doctoral advisors; b) the infrastructure and logistics necessary to carry out the research activity; c) the procedures and subsequent rules based on which doctoral studies are organized; d) the scientific activity of doctoral students; e) the training program based on advanced academic studies of doctoral students; f) social and academic services (including for participation at different events, publishing papers etc.) and counselling made available to doctoral students. 	Fulfilled	<p>It is recommended to widely engage the employers and graduates into the quality assurance process at UAIC IOSUD level. For instance, it is worth to diversify the types of surveys conducted and develop programme-related questionnaire for employers and graduates to collect their specific feedback in order to consider it for the programme improvement.</p>
28.	PI *	<p>C.1.1.2. Mechanisms are implemented during the stage of the doctoral study program to enable feedback from doctoral students allowing to identify their needs, as well as their overall level of satisfaction with the doctoral study program in order to ensure continuous improvement of the academic and administrative processes. Following the analysis of the results, there is evidence that an action plan was drafted and implemented.</p>	Fulfilled	<p>The suggestion is to conduct students surveys after each particular course before marking (ensuring full anonymity) as well as ask for feedback through general surveys after the defence of the PhD dissertation and a result of the study program completion. The outcomes of the survey should be discussed at all levels (by the supervisors, departments, FINANCE domain, IOSUD, UAIC) in order to better understand student's needs not only directly related to the research work, but also their psychological, financial, social, logistics, infrastructure, and other needs as well as their feedback on different services provided by the University. It is also important to inform the students how their feedback was considered and actioned by the Doctoral School. There is evidence from practice that if students see how their feedback is considered and helps to improve the processes, the students response rate and engagement into the quality assurance process increase.</p>
29.	CPI	<p>C.2.1.1. The IOSUD publishes on the website of the organizing institution, in compliance with</p>	Fulfilled	No specific recommendations

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		<p>the general regulations on data protection, information such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the Doctoral School regulation; b) the admission regulation; c) the doctoral studies contract; d) the study completion regulation including the procedure for the public presentation of the thesis; e) the content of training program based on advanced academic studies; f) the academic and scientific profile, thematic areas/research themes of the Doctoral advisors within the domain, as well as their institutional contact data; g) the list of doctoral students within the domain with necessary information (year of registration; advisor); 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	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.	Fulfilled	No specific recommendations
31.	PI	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.	Fulfilled	It is recommended to encourage students to check all their papers including assignments, articles, drafted chapters of the dissertation, etc. to check for similarity.
32.	PI	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.	Fulfilled	No specific recommendations
33.	PI *	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	Fulfilled	More diversified forms of students' international mobility such as summer schools, double diploma programs, trainings, and the other could be used. Besides it is worth to make geographical diversification of the students' mobility.

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		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.		
34.	PI	C.3.1.2. In the evaluated doctoral study domain, support is granted, including financial support, to the organization of doctoral studies in international co-tutelage or invitation of leading experts to deliver courses/lectures for doctoral students.	Fulfilled	It is suggested to employ foreign PhD supervisor or/and lecturer in order to wider involve them into the Finance Doctoral Domain activities.
35.	PI	C.3.1.3. The internationalization of activities carried out during the doctoral studies is supported by IOSUD through concrete measures (e.g., by participating in educational fairs to attract international doctoral students; by including international experts in guidance committees or doctoral committees etc.).	Fulfilled	It is recommended to include more foreign experts into the doctoral, guidance and advisory committees. Besides it is important to develop action plan to attract more international students.

The recommendations contained in the report shall be resumed in the indicators' analysis. Other general recommendations may be made that do not fit within a particular indicator.

VERY IMPORTANT!!! – *Each identified weakness must be correlated with at least one recommendation to improve the situation!*

VI. Conclusions and general recommendations

Several important issues raised during the evaluation are resumed and some general conclusions are drawn on the quality of the education provided within the doctoral study domain under review; the Experts' Panel also presents general assessments about the institution. Other general recommendation may also be presented, which cannot be related to a specific indicator and have not been presented at point V.

A decision is proposed, together with the reasons for granting it (if the Experts' Panel members do not reach a consensus, each of them can propose and argue his/her own decision).

As a result of the Finance doctoral domain evaluation the experts' panel has agreed that it meets major performance indicators and standards except PI A.1.3.3 and B.3.2.2 which are partially fulfilled. The relevant explanations and recommendations are provided above.



In addition to the recommendations on each specific performance indicator there are some other suggestions for further improvement:

In order to address the weaknesses identified in the SWOT it is recommended to develop strategy of the recruitment and admission of more PhD students including international students. The strategy could include activities related to national and international promotion of the Doctoral School using marketing techniques and technologies, potential of the graduates networking etc.

It is also important to engage employers and graduates into the Finance Doctoral domain quality assurance process (for instance, it would be useful to collect their feedback on the study programme and courses design, to improve courses and develop action plan on its basis, to have joint supervision by professor and business/industry representative, to use graduates for Doctoral School promotion within the country and overseas, to work with graduates and employers for research grants, scholarships etc.).

At institutional level it could be also recommended to consider the Rome Communique 2020 statements and to reflect it in the Doctoral School's and University's strategies - namely to ensure the University's role as "a key actor in meeting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030"; to bring its "educational, research and innovation capacities to bear on the fundamental global objectives"; to prepare learners of all study cycles for new "green" jobs and to become active, critical and responsible citizens. This could be done, not only via relevant research topics, but also via the courses content, methods applied, university sustainable development and "green" policy, the University's Sustainable Development Goals Reports on the annual basis etc.

It would be also useful to strengthen Student Support service at level of Doctoral School. For instance, to provide students with support when they face any issues mentioned in the Code of Doctoral Studies, to inform and explain them the procedures of withdrawal and interruption of the study, the consequences of academic integrity breach, the procedure of change of the PhD supervisor, the approach to the conflict mediation, and to support students in many other issues. Such Student Support service could be responsible for students retention policy, provide psychological, consultative, informational and other support. They can also support students to address their feeling of loneliness (students mentioned this fact in the student survey conducted by the evaluation panel).

The student survey has also demonstrate that students would benefit if administrative procedures could be less bureaucratic and more digitalized and simplified.



Another suggestion which could be beneficial at institutional level - to introduce Training Centre or Training services to support students and supervisors with the professional development opportunities. Some students may need additional training on developing such skills as academic writing, research fundraising, critical thinking, preparing studies to be published in peer-reviewed journals, This could be done either via elective courses or via skill units development and promoting. Students could benefit from such optional training courses as “The Reflective Practitioner”, “Action Research”, “Communicating Your Research”, “Leadership: Doctoral Theory and Practice”, “Research Fundraising”, “How to Publish in International Peer-reviewed Journals”. Continuous professional development of supervisors should also include improving and updating their specific teaching and supervision related skills (for instance, a series of short courses or training courses “Heutagogy and Cybergogy”, “Supporting Students Online”, “Effective Formative Feedback”, “Cross-Cultural Supervision”, “Social Media tools in modern teaching”, “Motivate your students effectively”, “PhD class management”, “Andragogy: How to teach adults in efficient way”, “Conflict Resolution”, “Integrated and contextualized learning”, “Problem-based and project-based learning”).

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.*