

The External Evaluation Report of a Doctoral Study Domain

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I. Introduction¹

This report was written in the scope of an ARACIS doctoral study domain evaluation, and provides a constructive analysis of the History domain at the Ovidius University of Constanța. The external expert carried out this task between 22 and 26 November 2021, entirely through an online platform, and additional communication was established via email. On 25 November, the panel coordinator was able to go on a site visit to the Doctoral School.

The committee was formed by Prof. Laurențiu Rădvan (Coordinator), Mr. Ioan Dumitru (PhD student) and Prof. Adriaan De Man (International expert).

The Doctoral School of Humanities hosts two domains, Philology and History. Meetings were held in articulation with both domain committees.

The institutional information that was transmitted to the committee members indicates that the university was created in 1990, PhD studies being one of its aims since then, and confirmed by the 2007 reconfiguration into a IOSUD, and by the subsequent 2012/13 subordination of doctoral schools to a Doctoral Studies Institute.

Philology as a doctoral field has a comparatively larger expression, both in terms of supervisors and students, given that History counts, at the exact moment this report is submitted, on one supervisor who has now retired. It is to be noted, though, that efforts have been made to correct this situation, and remedial solutions are impending.

II. Methods used

The English version of the internal evaluation report on the History domain was made available to the external expert by ARACIS, and was thoroughly analyzed before the online meetings took place. This report offers a structured insight into the holistic reality of the Doctoral School, and focuses its mission, composition, infrastructures, and administrative procedures. It was written in compliance with the

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



requested standards, and posed no general difficulties. Any needed clarifications were immediately given during the meetings.

The coordinator, who carried out the site visit, was in permanent close contact with the student and the international expert, which is why all committee members had an adequate perspective of the physical reality, namely the buildings and equipment.

In addition to this written and oral information, and the internal general meetings of all panel members with university representatives, this expert's feedback is also based on the interaction with faculty members acting in different administrative capacities, as well as current and former students, during online meetings focusing specifically on the History domain. The former included discussions with the Doctoral School contact person, the members that wrote the internal report, and the PhD supervisors, mainly on technical topics, while the latter consisted of conversations with selected alumni and students, on a wide range of matters related to perceived quality and individual inputs that converged towards a common positive outlook. In all instances, a student-centered preoccupation was very noticeable, and had to do with expected dimensions such as employability and career enhancement.

In addition to all these methods, a proactive exploration of the online website resources was useful to the assessment, and the recommendations below.

III. Analysis of ARACIS's performance indicators

Domain A. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

**general description of domain analysis.*

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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.*

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 application of existing administrative and procedural norms is confirmed through evidence provided as annexes to the report.

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.

- 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

Statements addressing this indicator are based on well-documented information. No normative issue can be pointed out.

Recommendations:

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.

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

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

Two academic years into the integration of a new IT system, specifically for PhD-level student management, no technical issues are apparent or were reported.

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.

- 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

In compliance with ministerial regulations, approved software programs have been in place, and all dissertations were verified against plagiarism.

Recommendations:

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.

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.

- 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

A minimum number of grant-based projects is presented.

Recommendations:

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

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

Ratio is in general compliance with the requirement.

Recommendations:

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.).*

- 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

In pre-pandemic circumstances, the percentage was in line with the minimum required reinvestment in student expenses. Current travel restrictions understandably inhibit physical participation in conferences and training. This could have been balanced by more intensive top-journal publications, and corresponding fees, yet it is not possible to force students into specific academic behaviors.

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion A.2. Research infrastructure

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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.*

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

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

The doctoral school is conveniently equipped with physical infrastructures, and especially with library database access, which is a critical research element. There is a clear focus on digital resources, both as basic source access and as platforms for publication.

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.



Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion A.3. Quality of Human Resources

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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.*

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

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

This criterion is not fulfilled, as the current reality does not comply with the minimum standards for maintaining a Doctoral School. While the situation is explainable by logical and honest arguments, the fact remains that, as of today, the operational and statutory viability is not assured.

Recommendations:

The indicator is not fulfilled.

Remedial action is to be taken, in the form of immediate integration of qualified supervisors. This has been proactively addressed by the institution, and depends now on impending administrative procedures.

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

Currently, there is no full-time tenured supervisor in the History domain at the Doctoral School.

Recommendations:

The indicator is not fulfilled.

The fundamental challenges and recommendations are the same as for indicator A.3.1.1, consisting of HR-related matters: simply put, new supervisors need to be hired, transferred, or



promoted. As mentioned above, this is currently being processed, which should bring the ratio to the minimum level by the end of the academic year.

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

Despite consisting of a small pool of faculty members (two), the teaching ensured by them was within their field of specialization.

Recommendations:

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

The fact that only one supervisor was assigned to ten PhD students, and that he is unavailable to continue performing this task, does not comply with the 20% maximum stipulated by the regulations.

Recommendations:

The indicator is not fulfilled.

Again, the core issue stems from a lack of supervisors. Over the years, the extremely low number of qualified PhD supervisors does not allow for conveniently calculating percentages. As mentioned before, the solution for this consists of integrating more qualified faculty members, which is currently being done.

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.*

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.



Performance Indicator A.3.2.1. *At least 50% of the doctoral thesis advisors in the evaluated domain have at least 5 Web of Science- or ERIH-indexed publications in magazines of impact, or other achievements of relevant significance for that domain, including international-level contributions that indicate progress in scientific research - development - innovation for the evaluated domain. The aforementioned doctoral thesis advisors enjoy international awareness within the past five years, consisting of: membership on scientific boards of international publications and conferences; membership on boards of international professional associations; guests in conferences or expert groups working abroad, or membership on doctoral defense commissions at universities abroad or co-leading with universities abroad. For Arts and Sports and Physical Education Sciences, doctoral thesis advisors shall prove their international visibility within the past five years by their membership on the boards of professional associations, membership in organizing committees of arts events and international competitions, membership on juries or umpire teams in artistic events or international competitions.*

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

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The supervisor (who is not remaining at the doctoral school) has a reputable academic track record, and his profile is above-average.

Recommendations:

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

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Only one (corresponding to 100%) of the supervisors active during the last years has an excellent, above-average scientific production.

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

**general description of domain analysis.*

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*



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.*

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.*

- 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 ratio stands as 1.75, reflecting a satisfactory average attraction capacity, but with irregular yearly patterns.

Recommendations:

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.*

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

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

The admission procedures include qualitative and quantitative criteria, which do include an interview.

Recommendations:

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%.*

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.



- 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

Overall dropout rates are below 30%.

Recommendations:

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.*

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

Three seminars qualify as such, and one of them is focused on research methods in History.

Recommendations:

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

One seminar is focused on Ethics in academia.

Recommendations:

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

Established program learning outcomes are not only defined in the alignment of syllabi with course curricula, but their validity is verified by regular audits, and subject to review if needed.

Recommendations:

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

Individual advisor and guidance committee meetings were documented at the Doctoral School, in accordance with the regulations.

Recommendations:

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

The long-term average allocation is not appropriate, which was recently tackled by integrating adjunct/external advisors (again due to the unavailability of tenured supervisors). This context was referred to above, and is being dealt with.

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

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.



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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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.*

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

At least three randomly reviewed papers do contribute significantly to historical research. The quality of these texts might have reached a larger audience in other types of outlet (namely in terms of journal exposure).

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

The number of presentations is higher than that of PhD students.

Recommendations:

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.*

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

This indicator is fully complied with.

Recommendations:

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

As indicated in the internal evaluation report, this ratio cannot be applied, as less than ten dissertations were defended during the period under evaluation.

Recommendations:

The indicator is 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.*

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.*

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

Quality control and improvement at the Doctoral School is carried out adequately, and the respective (self-) assessment procedures are regularly reviewed. Specific activities that fall under this criterion, such as the ones related to the supervisors, may be more difficult to assess separately, in a comparative, evolving light, due to the reduced human resources at the History Domain.

Recommendations:

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

Several methods allow an interaction with PhD students, and their inputs are integrated into strategic development plans for the Doctoral School.

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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.*

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

All required items and fundamental information is publicly available on the university website.

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.

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

Library-integrated commercial databases are available and include the main gateways for accessing electronic sources.

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

This criterion is met, without any need for clarification.



Recommendations:

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

PhD students benefit from access to a common space, and to shared infrastructures of relevance to the Doctoral Domain.

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

Criterion C.3. Internationalization

**general description of the criterion analysis.*

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.*

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

International MoU and mobility agreements have been concluded, namely for doctoral studies in History, which establishes a framework for training, research, and learning activities abroad. The minimum percentages are however not met. Especially regarding the limited engagement in mobility programs such as ERASMUS, a reason discussed in the interviews is the age and career stage of most PhD students.

Recommendations:

The indicator is not fulfilled.



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

- 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

Co-supervision/tutelage was practiced twice in the History Domain. In addition, a convenient number and variety of external experts did participate in the doctoral program.

Recommendations:

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

The History Domain was able to benefit from university outreach and promotion activities, namely at international academic fairs.

Recommendations:

The indicator is fulfilled.

IV. SWOT Analysis

<p><u>Strengths:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - internationalization strategy with a definite focus on graduate/doctoral studies. - proper infrastructures and motivated human resources - network of stakeholders and alumni 	<p><u>Weaknesses:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - current lack of doctoral supervisors and narrow fields of specialization. - student body is composed almost exclusively of established professionals.
<p><u>Opportunities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to strengthen a cultural ecosystem with international and regional stakeholders (namely in terms of research, consultancy, and employability). - to intensify the outreach efforts for promoting the uniqueness of the doctoral school. 	<p><u>Threats:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - competition from other national universities. - History may become a less sought after discipline to invest in, in comparison with interdisciplinary or STEM-based fields. - low student intake.

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>	<p>The application of existing administrative and procedural norms is confirmed through evidence provided as annexes to the report.</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>
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>	<p>Statements addressing this indicator are based on well-documented information. No normative issue can be pointed out.</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></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>	<p>Two academic years into the integration of a new IT system, specifically for PhD-level student</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
			management, no technical issues are apparent or were reported.	
4.	PI	A.1.2.2. The existence and use of an appropriate software program and evidence of its use to verify the percentage of similarity in all doctoral theses.	In compliance with ministerial regulations, approved software programs have been in place, and all dissertations were verified against plagiarism.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
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.	A minimum number of grant-based projects is presented.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
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%.	Ratio is in general compliance with the requirement.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
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	In pre-pandemic circumstances, the percentage was in line with the minimum required reinvestment in student expenses.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		students (attending conferences, summer schools, training, programs abroad, publication of specialty papers or other specific forms of dissemination etc.).	Current travel restrictions understadibly inhibit physical participation in conferences and training. This could have been balanced by more intensive top-journal publications, and corresponding fees, yet it is not possible to force students into specific academic behaviors.	
8.	CPI	A.2.1.1. The venues and the material equipment available to the doctoral school enable the research activities in the evaluated domain to be carried out, in line with the assumed mission and objectives (computers, specific software, equipment, laboratory equipment, library, access to international databases etc.). The research infrastructure and the provision of research services are presented to the public through a specific platform. The research infrastructure described above, which was purchased and developed within the past 5 years will be presented distinctly	The doctoral school is conveniently equipped with physical infrastructures, and especially with library database access, which is a critical research element. There is a clear focus on digital resources, both as basic source access and as platforms for publication.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
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.	This criterion is not fulfilled, as the current reality does not comply with the minimum standards for maintaining a Doctoral School. While the situation is explainable by logical and honest arguments, the fact remains that, as of today, the operational and	<i>The indicator is not fulfilled.</i> Remedial action is to be taken, in the form of immediate integration of qualified supervisors. This has been proactively addressed by the institution, and depends now on impending administrative procedures.

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
			statutory viability is not assured.	
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.	Currently, there is no full-time tenured supervisor in the History domain at the Doctoral School.	<i>The indicator is not fulfilled.</i> The fundamental challenges and recommendations are the same as for indicator A.3.1.1, consisting of HR-related matters: simply put, new supervisors need to be hired, transferred, or promoted. As mentioned above, this is currently being processed, which should bring the ratio to the minimum level by the end of the academic year.
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.	Despite consisting of a small pool of faculty members (two), the teaching ensured by them was within their field of specialization.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
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%.	The fact that only one supervisor was assigned to ten PhD students, and that he is unavailable to continue performing this task, does not comply with the 20% maximum stipulated by the regulations.	<i>The indicator is not fulfilled.</i> Again, the core issue stems from a lack of supervisors. Over the years, the extremely low number of qualified PhD supervisors does not allow for conveniently calculating percentages. As mentioned before, the solution for this consists of integrating more qualified faculty members, which is currently being done.
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	The supervisor (who is not remaining at the doctoral school) has a reputable	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		<p>significance for that domain, including international-level contributions that indicate progress in scientific research - development - innovation for the evaluated domain. The aforementioned doctoral thesis advisors enjoy international awareness within the past five years, consisting of: membership on scientific boards of international publications and conferences; membership on boards of international professional associations; guests in conferences or expert groups working abroad, or membership on doctoral defense commissions at universities abroad or co-leading with universities abroad. For Arts and Sports and Physical Education Sciences, doctoral thesis advisors shall prove their international visibility within the past five years by their membership on the boards of professional associations, membership in organizing committees of arts events and international competitions, membership on juries or umpire teams in artistic events or international competitions.</p>	<p>academic track record, and his profile is above-average.</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>	<p>Only one (corresponding to 100%) of the supervisors active during the last years has an excellent, above-average scientific production.</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>
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</p>	<p>The ratio stands as 1.75, reflecting a satisfactory average attraction capacity, but with irregular yearly patterns.</p>	<p><i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i></p>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		budget put out through contest within the doctoral studies domain is at least 1,2.		
16.	PI *	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.	The admission procedures include qualitative and quantitative criteria, which do include an interview.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
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%.	Overall dropout rates are below 30%.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
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.	Three seminars qualify as such, and one of them is focused on research methods in History.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
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.	One seminar is focused on Ethics in academia.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
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.	Established program learning outcomes are not only defined in the alignment of syllabi with course curricula, but their validity is verified by regular audits, and subject to review if needed.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
21.	PI	B.2.1.4. All along the duration of the doctoral training, doctoral students in the domain receive counselling/guidance from	Individual advisor and guidance committee meetings	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		functional guidance commissions, which is reflected in written guidance and feedback or regular meeting.	were documented at the Doctoral School, in accordance with the regulations.	
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.	The long-term average allocation is not appropriate, which was recently tackled by integrating adjunct/external advisors (again due to the unavailability of tenured supervisors). This context was referred to above, and is being dealt with.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
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	At least three randomly reviewed papers do contribute significantly to historical research. The quality of these texts might have reached a larger audience in other types of outlet (namely in terms of journal exposure).	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
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.	The number of presentations is higher than that of PhD students.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
25.	PI *	B.3.2.1. The number of doctoral theses allocated to one specialist coming from a higher education institution, other than the	This indicator is fully complied with.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		evaluated IOSUD should not exceed two (2) in a year for the theses coordinated by the same doctoral thesis advisor.		
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.	As indicated in the internal evaluation report, this ratio cannot be applied, as less than ten dissertations were defended during the period under evaluation.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
27.	PI	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.	Quality control and improvement at the Doctoral School is carried out adequately, and the respective (self-) assessment procedures are regularly reviewed. Specific activities that fall under this criterion, such as the ones related to the supervisors, may be more difficult to assess separately, in a comparative, evolving light, due to the reduced human resources at the History Domain.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
28.	PI *	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	Several methods allow an interaction with PhD students, and their inputs are integrated into strategic	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		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.	development plans for the Doctoral School.	
29.	CPI	C.2.1.1. The IOSUD publishes on the website of the organizing institution, in compliance with the general regulations on data protection, information such as: a) the Doctoral School regulation; b) the admission regulation; c) the doctoral studies contract; d) the study completion regulation including the procedure for the public presentation of the thesis; e) the content of training program based on advanced academic studies; f) the academic and scientific profile, thematic areas/research themes of the Doctoral advisors within the domain, as well as their institutional contact data; g) the list of doctoral students within the domain with necessary information (year of registration; advisor); h) information on the standards for developing the doctoral thesis; i) links to the doctoral theses' summaries to be publicly presented and the date, time, place where they will be presented; this information will be communicated at least twenty days before the presentation.	All required items and fundamental information is publicly available on the university website.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
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.	Library-integrated commercial databases are available and include the main gateways for accessing electronic sources.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
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.	This criterion is met, without any need for clarification.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
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.	PhD students benefit from access to a common space, and to shared infrastructures of relevance to the Doctoral Domain.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
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 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.	International MoU and mobility agreements have been concluded, namely for doctoral studies in History, which establishes a framework for training, research, and learning activities abroad. The minimum percentages are however not met. Especially regarding the limited engagement in mobility programs such as ERASMUS, a reason discussed in the interviews is the age and career stage of most PhD students.	<i>The indicator is not fulfilled.</i> Recommendation is to motivate students to participate in mobility programs.
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.	Co-supervision/tutelage was practiced twice in the History Domain. In addition, a convenient number and variety of external experts did participate in the doctoral program.	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>
35.	PI	C.3.1.3. The internationalization of activities carried out during the doctoral	The History Domain was able to benefit	<i>The indicator is fulfilled.</i>

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI *, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
		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.).	from university outreach and promotion activities, namely at international academic fairs.	

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

The evaluation recognizes an overall high quality program, operating in a proper infrastructure: the Doctoral School offers physical conditions that are in line with international and Romanian standards. Although the joint panel decisions are to be presented as a final combined statement, this reviewer's conclusions are that the Doctoral School, and in particular the History domain, functions within the stipulated norms and regulations. The one critical matter has to do with the several criteria related to thesis advisors. A suggestion for improvement is investing in qualified faculty members, tackling the current lack of qualified supervisors in the field of History. An internal corrective process is currently ongoing, which is why this suggestion may become partly redundant in the near future. Still, a strategic perspective needs to incorporate a diversification of faculty profiles, external fundraising, and attracting more PhD students, as medium-term goals. There is little gain in investing in HR if consistently low student numbers are admitted to the program. One option may be investing in a coherent international outreach and promotion of the doctoral school, part of which should insist on regional uniqueness as a catalyst for European research integration. Labour market-oriented research and feedback is fundamental, with special focus on young upcoming researchers, who would legitimately invest in a PhD to improve their professional competitiveness, in addition to other motivations they may have. This goes hand in hand with capitalising on quality outputs (and especially on indexed journal papers), through which PhD students and graduates build competitive international portfolios.

All this was discussed with representatives from the Doctoral School, and constructive ideas were well received by all, as several challenges had already been identified, to some extent, in the self-assessment report. If the major weakness, namely the lack of PhD supervisors mentioned above, is dealt with shortly and effectively, the decision is to favourably evaluate the Doctoral School.

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.*

*3 December 2021
Adriaan De Man*