ROMANIAN AGENCY FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION
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The External Evaluation Report of an Institution Organizing Doctoral Study Programs (IOSUD)

"1 Decembrie 1918" University of Alba Iulia

I. Introduction

I was invited by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS) to join the evaluation team for institutional evaluation of the doctoral studies at the "1 Decembrie 1918" University of Alba Iulia (UAI), namely of its IOSUD level.

The UAI started to provide doctoral studies from 2000 and it currently has four doctoral schools: History (since 2000), Philology (since 2005), Accounting, Theology (both since 2009). It may be said the existing doctoral programmes are well established at the UAI and there have been almost three hundred (286) graduates so far. At the moment, 163 PhD students are enrolled at the UAI, quite proportionally at all the four programmes.

I would like to express my gratitude to Ms Marilena Dobre, an ARACIS officer, for her very helpful support throughout the evaluation process. I also benefited from a highly collegial approach of the whole group of evaluators led by Prof. Iordan Petrescu, the Evaluation Director and Prof. Razvan Liviu Nistor, the Coordinator of the IOSUD Committee, for their very helpful and supportive approach. I would also like to thank the colleagues who interpreted during the meetings, especially to Andra-Iulia Ursa. All these activities were very helpful.

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

II. Methods used

Prior to the site visit I had studied the English version of the Self-Assessment Report (SAR) of the UAI and some other relevant documents. During the visit, which was carried out online due to pandemic restrictions on 20 to 24 September 2021, I had a good opportunity to enhance the information I had received about doctoral studies at the UAI.

The site visit started with a preliminary online meeting of experts, who are members of the evaluation team. At this meeting, preparation and harmonization of evaluation stages in the blended format was discussed. Then the

online meeting with the UAI's leading representatives followed. During the whole period of evaluation, I had a chance to participate at a number of plenary/group meetings with representatives of the UAI and IOSUD-UAI, directors of doctoral schools, academic staff, members of the Ethics Commission, QA representatives, PhD students, alumni, members of the Doctoral University Studies Council, employers and other persons. All this helped me to complete the image.

III. Analysis of ARACIS's performance indicators

Domain A. INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

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

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

The UAI emphasizes the aim „*to constantly develop an academic community able to increase the value of the archaeological, social, economic and cultural heritage of our region and committed to creating, preserving and disseminating knowledge, enhancing the academic community's excellence, developing students' skills and competences through promoting a culture of values, morality, inquiry, research, and life-long learning.*" (webpage of the UAI)

The UAI „*is also committed to continuing the process of extending, modernising and adapting its research and education facilities and to developing a complex – both theoretical and practical – academic training system for all those who are willing to become highly qualified specialists in different fields of activity, adequately prepared for the ever more demanding and challenging national and international labour market. Therefore, we are permanently improving our undergraduate BA and BSc programmes, as well as post-graduate studies (Master and Ph.D. programmes).*" (webpage of the UAI).

According to the SAR (p. 9), the doctoral programmes within the IOSUD-UAI „*have the promotion of high-quality fundamental and applied research specific to the field of History, Philology, Accounting and Theology with international visibility as its strategic objective.*"

It may be stated these aims of the UAI are focusing on three main pillars of the operation of the university, as they usually are relating to all levels of studies, including the one of PhD: education, research, and public reach (social role); however, from the documentation available it seems that in the case of PhD studies it is somewhat narrowed to education and research.

Performance Indicator A.1.1.1. The existence of specific regulations and their application at the level of the IOSUD, respectively at the Doctoral School(s):
        (a) the internal regulations of the administrative structures (the institutional regulations for the organization and conduct of doctoral studies programs, the regulation(s) of Doctoral School(s);

(b) the Methodology for conducting elections at the level of the Council of University Doctoral Studies (CSUD), respectively at Doctoral School(s) including elections by the students of their representatives in CSUD/Council of the Doctoral School (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 CSUD/Council of the Doctoral School with evidence of the regularity of meetings;

f) the contract for doctoral studies;

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

The UAI-IOSUD has developed and have in use a complex set of regulations, methodologies and procedures to ensure doctoral programs within the doctoral schools can be fully realised, in accordance with the legislation. This also includes methodologies for conducting elections, incl. those of students to the bodies relevant to the doctoral schools/programs. The same relates to admission procedures, recognition of the supervisors´ status, procedures for the analysis and approvals of proposals about doctoral study programs, and more.

Doctoral studies have their own organizing structure at the UAI, in which the Council and Board of doctoral studies have an important role. The doctoral schools constitute the main structure within which doctoral studies are conducted.

The financial management seems to be in line with current legislation.

> *Recommendation:*
> - *Consider the possibility of explicitly following all three main university pillars (teaching, research, public reach) within the mission and objectives of the doctoral studies at the UAI.*

> **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.*

It appears the regulations rfelated to the doctoral programs at UAI-IOSUD include mandatory criteria, procedures and standards relevant for these studies.

> **The indicator is fulfilled.**

Performance Indicator A.1.1.3. Doctoral schools included in IOSUD are organized as disciplinary or interdisciplinary disciplines/thematic, according to Article 158, paragraph (7) of the Law of National Education No. 1/2011 with subsequent amendments and additions.

Doctoral schools included in UAI-IOSUD are organized as disciplinary. The doctoral programmes have some unifying features across the domains, at the same time there is a respect to each individual programme and its specifics. This is evidenced by a set of regulations the university has adopted and strives to implement, which was proven during the interviews, too.

> *The indicator is fulfilled.*

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

It appears that the IOSUD-UAI has all the logistic resources and infrastructures necessary to carry out doctoral studies and their mission. This applies to facilities and infrastructure for learning/teaching and research such as study rooms, laboratories, the library, IT-supported facilities and others.

And the IOSUD-UAI and its doctoral schools seem to provide PhD students with solid access to resources and infrastructure for their doctoral studies. All PhD students have free access to national and international information resources. The library provides students with a significant number of documents including electronic resources. The students' work also seems to be connected with the operation of research centres and it is corresponding to general rules and regulations accepted at the level of the university.

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

The above mentioned resources include IT system to keep track of doctoral students and their academic background.

> *The indicator is fulfilled.*

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

The UAI uses the antiplagiarism sotware sistemantiplagiat.ro and it applies its own rules how to work with this. These rules slightly differ across the doctoral schools (in the definition of an acceptable extent of identical texts), but they seem to be well thought over in all four cases.

> *The indicator is fulfilled.*

Criterion A.2. Research infrastructure

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

The infrastructure available to IOSUD/doctoral schools at the UAI seems to be on a reasonable level and it provides necessary conditions for the students to conduct their study and research. At the same time, some more funding opportunities could possibly increase a chance to interlink more effectively senior and junior research.

- *Consider the possibility of providing an internal research grant scheme for senior academics in order to help them prepare better for external competition for research funding.*

- *Consider possibilities to develop internal research grant scheme in order for PhD students to focus on their own research projects and/or link them with senior research of their supervisors.*

Performance Indicator A.2.1.1. *The IOSUD/the doctoral school(s) present proof of posessing or having rented adequate spaces for research activity specific to doctoral studies (laboratories, experimental fields, research stations etc.)*

The infrastructure for research includes the UAI library with more than 130.000 volumes, access to international databases, reading rooms, computers.

There are infrastructural units at some faculties positively linked with the PhD studies – as the examples the Centre for Economic Research, or "Iuliu aniu" Center for Historical and Political Studies, "Iuliu Paul" Institute of Systemic Archaeology, and more.

> **The indicator is fulfilled.**

Performance Indicator A.2.1.2. *The IOSUD/doctoral school(s) has/have collaboration agreements with higher education institutions, research institutes, research networks for joint partnerships and have access for using various research infrastructures; the offer for research services is presented publicly using a dedicated platform.*

The UAI-IOSUD has concluded co-operation agreements with higher education institutions abroad. As a result, some joint acaemic events, such as conferences are ocassionaly organized on this basis. It needs to be said the "international traffic" has its potential for further development at UAI-IOSUD, though (see the section on internationalisation of this report).

> **The indicator is partially fulfilled.**

Performance Indicator A.2.1.3. *The IOSUD/doctoral school(s) proves that it is/are concerned with permanent renewal of the research infrastructure to provide doctoral students access to up-dated*

research resources, by applying to various funding competitions and using own university resources for acquiring new research infrastructure.

The SAR contains some information about the efforts to renew the research infrastructure and this was proven during some interviews, in relevant relation to different fields of doctoral studies conducted at the UAI.

> **The indicator is fulfilled.**

Criterion A.3. Quality of Human Resource

Standard A.3.1. At the level of each Doctoral School there are sufficient qualified staff to ensure a quality educational process.

This can be said at the level of each doctoral school there are sufficiently qualified staff to ensure a quality of educational process.

In general, the body of doctoral supervisors meets all the relevant requirements. Some supervisors, albeit not all of them manage to attract/win external research grants and provide PhD students with clear and useful links to their research along with extra funding. This is a good practice, but it does not apply to all supervisors/PhD students; as a consequence, some PhD students need to search for extra funding in working opportunities that are not always relevant for their research. This may result in PhD students learning some useful knowledge and skills, but at the same time also facing extra burdens within their studies. Clearly, more funding to senior as well as junior (PhD) research would be beneficial.

Some supervisors seem to supervise a considerably high number of PhD students (according to the SAR, in one case eleven students – prof. Campan; often around eight). This undoubtedly increases the demands on the supervision process. The university does not seem to have a training system for supervision skills development. This evokes the question where the supervisors gain these skills, which are essential for their highly demanding work in the long run and for the sensitive process of supervision as such. At the same time, it needs to be pointed out that the arrangement of linking the PhD student with the supervisor, as well as with the PhD committee seems to be a very good idea, offering those involved (mainly PhD students, as well as supervisors) a chance for collegial consultations on a broader basis (a safety net).

> *Recommendation:*
> - *Consider possibilities of the systematic training of supervisors in supervision skills.*

Performance Indicator * A.3.1.1. The share of Doctoral advisors coordinating simultaneously more than 8 doctoral students but not more than 12 during their doctoral studies does not exceed 20%.

According to the data from the SAR, this indicator is met, more proportional distribution of supervision responsibilities would perhaps deserve at the doctoral school of philology.

> **The indicator is fulfilled.**

Performance Indicator A.3.1.2. At least 50% of all teaching/research staff involved in teaching/research activities related to training programs for advanced university studies or in individual research/art creation programs have a full-time employment contract for an indefinite period with the IOSUD.

The SAR does not contain this information, from the interviews it appeared that a vast majority of staff involved in the doctoral programs are local people employed at the UAI.

The indicator is fulfilled/partially fulfilled/not fulfilled. (Cannot judge for sure)

Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

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

Standard B.1.1. Candidates admitted to doctoral studies demonstrate academic, research and professional performance and are diversified as social representation and by gender.

There are clear admission rules and procedures at the IOSUD-UAI. They accentuate relevant selection criteria such as previous academic, research and professional performance, the applicant's CV stating his/her interest in research, publication profile in the field and the proposal for a future research project. The applicants are also interviewed during the admission procedure. Candidates seem to be diversified as by social representation and by gender (the latter with some exceptions of Theology).

There is an internal mechanism that covers the initiation, approval, monitoring and evaluation of PhD study programmes and it involves the main actors of these processes.

*Performance Indicator * B.1.1.1.* 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.

As mentioned above, previous academic, research and professional performance, the applicant's interest in research, publication profile in the field and the proposal for a future research project are considered at the admission to doctoral study programs at IOSUD-UAI.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator B.1.1.2. The IOSUD/doctoral school(s) have a policy for stimulating enrollment of doctoral students coming from disadvantaged social environments, by allocating reserved positions in the admission procedure and/or granting special scholarships, as well as organsing support programs to prevent drop-outs.

It does not seem evident the UAI-IOSUD have allocated reserved positions in the admission procedure or PhD students from disadvantaged social environments. At the same time, the UAI is providing some scholarship support to PhD students. According to information provided by the university, the UAI provides support measures for students (mainly psychological intervention programme for students with learning difficulties). The Covid-19 limitations have been reflected by the UAI – the period of preparation and defence of PhD theses could be extended by three months upon the PhD students request free of charge.

Recommendations:
- *Consider possibility to open PhD studies more to students from socially disadvantaged environments.*

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

Criterion B.2. The content of doctoral programs

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

The curriculum in PhD studies across the domains include compulsory, optional as well as elective courses. Apart from domain-specific courses (incl. research methodology) there are courses focused on ethics and integrity, self-management, personal and professional development, and these are an important source for PhD students to obtain relevant knowledge and skills. These programmes also comprise pedagogical activities (involvement in teaching). All these aspects may be appreciated.

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.
    As stated above.
    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.
    As stated above.
    The indicator is fulfilled.

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

The UAI-IOSUD makes sure the doctoral study programs lead to relevant learning oucomes specifying the knowledge, skills, reposnsibilities and autonomy of PhD students.

> ***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

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

The UAI seems to support the efforts of PhD students to capitalize on the research by conference presentations, publications and other forms of dissemination of the results of their research, mainly at their own university and nationally; the PhD students seem to make use of this.

Performance Indicator B.3.1.1. For the doctoral school there are in place mechanisms for valorification of the results of doctoral studies in accordance with the specificity of the particular domain (i.e. technologial transfer, products, patents in the case of exact sciences; products and services for social sciences and humanities; festivals, contests, recitals, sports competitions; cultural-arts orders in the vocational domain; presentations ar national and international conerences, publication of research results in national and international publications, engaging doctroal students in writing research-development projects etc.)

> As stated above.
> ***The indicator is fulfilled.***

Criterion B.4. Quality of doctoral theses

Standard B.4.1. Doctoral theses fulfil high quality standards

In general, the quality of PhD dissertations seems to be in line with the national standards and the evaluation mechanism is effectively in place. According to the SAR, in the last five years, there have been no invalidated dissertations, a total of 82 students completed their PhD studies in this period successfully.

Performance Indicator B.4.1.1. At the level of IOSUD, the percentage of theses non- validated, at the level of General Council of the National Council for Attestation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates (CNADTCU), without the right of further amendments and re-organizing the process of public defending, is not exceeding 5% in the last 5 years.

> As stated above.
> ***The indicator is fulfilled.***

Domain C. QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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

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

The IOSUD-UAI annually conducts internal evaluation of the activities of the doctoral schools, based on the methodology approved by the university. A periodic self-evaluation is part of this process. The focus of this procedure is placed on the fulfilment of legal requirements, identification of good practices, evaluation of human resources, research, material endowment, evaluation of research results, quality management and other aspects. Scientific activity of the supervisors is also a part of it. This all seems to be an adequate institutional framework, while procedures are in place and relevant quality assurance policies are applied at the IOSUD-UAI.

The IOSUD-UAI monitors and controls periodically the infrastructure and logistic procedures necessary to carry out research. This involves maintenance, repairs, safety and efficiency of infrastructure as a basis for adequate support for research activities.

Evaluation actions are coordinated at the level of doctoral schools. There is some evidence about the efforts of the IOSUD-UAI to develop further (developmental) activities based also on the reflection of the findings of the evaluation.

Performance Indicator C.1.1.1. The IOSUD 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 doctoral school(s), 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 academic and social services (including participation to various events, publication of papers etc.) and counselling made available to doctoral students.

> As stated above.
> *The indicator is fulfilled.*

Performance Indicator C.1.1.2. Students' associations and, according to the case, representatives of students organise elections in the community of doctoral students, for positions in the CSUD, by universal vote, direct and secret, all doctoral studnets having the right of electing or being elected.

The IOSUD-UAI has developed and is using Methodology on the organisation and carrying out the academic elections, which includes doctoral students, too.

> *The indicator is fulfilled.*

Performance Indicator C.1.1.3. Students' associations and, according to the case, representatives of students organise elections in the community of doctoral students at the level of each doctoral school, for positions in the councils of doctoral schools, by universal vote, direct and secret, all doctoral students having the right of electing or being elected.

The students are organizing elections of doctoral students for the positions in the councils of doctoral schools (mandate for a current period is 2021-2026).

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator C.1.1.4. Following the internal evaluation, IOSUD and the doctoral schools draft strategies and policies aiming to eliminate the identified deficiencies and to stimulate scientific and academic performance of IOSUD.

It seems apparent the IOSUD-UAI is, based on internal evaluation, drafting improving strategies related to specific areas of its operation.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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

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

The IOSUD UAI is making avaiulable information for students and possibly also for candidates of studies, this mainly relates to guidelines of the doctoral schools, admission regulations, doctoral studies contract, regulations on the completion of studies incl. the procedure of public defense of the dissertation, curricula, scientific/research profile of the supervisors, standards related to the dissertations, conferences, publishing opportunities, and more. Vast majority of this information is in Romanian. The information about doctoral studies in English langauge is scarce.

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 IOSUD/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 the training study 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) information on the opportunities for doctoral students aiming to attend conferences,to publish articles, awarding scholarships etc.

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

> ***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

The IOSUD-UAI students are provided with access to resources needed to conduct their doctoral studies. See also the section A.1.2 of this report.

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 the their thesis.*

> As stated above.
> ***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.*

> As stated above.
> ***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

> As stated above.
> ***The indicator is fulfilled.***

Criterion C.3. Internationalization

Standard C.3.1. IOSUD/Doctoral school has a strategy in place and it is applied to enhance the internationalization of doctoral studies.

One of the strategic aims of the UAI is to strengthen international features of many aspects of its work. As for the PhD studies, there seems to be a potential for improvement. Although PhD students may benefit from mobility arrangements, not many of them actually make use of it. Instead of standard mobility stays abroad, they often rather go for short-term visits (conferences and the like). This might be understandable in many cases (to combine study and work is far from easy in a number of cases). However, this still needs to be seen as a missed

opportunity. Moreover, there are also students practically without any professional/study international experience in the PhD programmes at the UAI.

The mobility traffic seems to be rather one-way oriented: there are not many incoming students who could integrate into PhD studies at the IOSUD-UAI. It would be beneficial to have more frequent participation of guest speakers/visiting professors in some parts of the PhD studies at the IOSUD-UAI.

There is a potential to increase a number of joint/double degree PhD studies at the IOSUD-UAI and this potential has not been used very much so far.

The English version of the UAI's website does not contain sufficient information about the PhD study possibilities at the institution.

Performance Indicator C.3.1.1. IOSUD, for every doctoral school, 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%, wich is the target at the level of the European Higher Education Area.

Recommendations:
- *Consider possibilities of encouraging the PhD students to use opportunities for longer study stays at relevant foreign institutions.*
- *Consider possibilities to attract incoming international mobility students more effectively so that they get involved in the IOSUD-UAI activities.*

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

Performance Indicator C.3.1.2. IOSUD supports, including providing financial support, to the organization of doctoral studies in international co-tutelage or invitation of leading experts to deliver courses/lectures for doctoral students.

The doctoral schools seem to have some activities in theis area, but overal, there is a potential for the development.

Recommendations:

- *Make sure that visiting professors create a vital part of the offer of IOSUD-UAI across the domains.*
- *Consider possibilities to encourage the recruitment of promising external students in PhD studies at the IOSUD-UAI in a proactive manner.*

The indicator is partially fulfilled.

Performance Indicator C.3.1.3. *At least 10% of the doctoral theses of every doctoral schools of the IOSUD are drafted and/or submitted in an international foreign language or are organised in international co-tutelage.*

This performance indicator seems to be fulfilled by three doctoral schools, the doctoral school of thology is under 10 %.

> *Recommendations:*

- *Make sure there is a sufficient proportion of PhD dissertations written in a relevant foreign language.*
- *Make sure a possibility to organize joint/double degrees is used effectively.*

> **The indicator is partially fulfilled.**

Performance Indicator C.3.1.4. *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.).*

The SAR informs about some international appearances, mainly of the IOSUD-UAI staff members, where they could, among other things, inform about a possibility to follow PhD programs at the IOSUD-UAI. The webpage of the IOSUD-UAI does not really inform effectively about these studies in English language.

> *Recommendation:*

- *Improve information about PhD study opportunities in the English version of the UAI's website.*

> **The indicator is partially fulfilled.**

Criterion C.4. System for assurance of ethical and academic integrity

Standard C.4.1. IOSUD/Doctoral school has a functional and efficient system in place for prevention and assuring ethical and academic integrity norms

Performance Indicator C.4.1.1. *IOSUD, applies the current provisions regulating ethics, deontology/academic integrity, respectively to academic freedom and has developed:*
- *policies based on prevention regarding possible violations of the Code of ethics and academic integrity, demonstrated by public postioinings, studies, analyses or measures taken;*
- *practices and mechanisms for preventing fraud, from an institutional perspective as well as from the perspective of the doctoral students;*
- *practices for preventing possible fraud in academic activity, research or any other activity, including active measures for preventing and avoiding plagiarism of any kind, as well as promoting ethical and integrity/deontology principles or observing intellectual property norms, authors' rights and other related rights, among all members of the academic community;*
- *administrative instruments which allow applying effective and eliminatory sanctions;*
- *mechanisms and measures to assure equal opportunities and protection against intolerance and discrimination of any kind;*

IOSUD monitors and permanently evaluates these practices and can prove they are applied to all activities and engagement of students in all these processes, and the results of the monitoring is made public yearly or whenever it becomes necessary.

The UAI seems to have prevention-based policies focued at possible violation on the ethical and academic integrity rules. They fully relate to the doctoral study programes, too. Also, administrative procedures to ensure the application of effective sanctions in case of need seem to be in place. These policies and practices are monitored.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator C.4.1.2. *All intimations regarding suspicion of plagiarism related to doctoral theses have been analysed and resolved by the IOSUD within the time interval legally established for expressing in writing its position regarding the intimation received.*

In the last 5years no case of suscpicion of plagiarism was dealt with the the IOSUD-UAI.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator C.4.1.3. *Annual Reports of the Ethics commission of the IOSUD contain information on the stage of solving each case of intimation or own-intiative intimation regarding violation of norms or ethical aspects relevant for university doctoral studies. description of the facts, the findings from the assessed institution's documents and the evaluation visit itself.*

There seem to be no such cases in the evaluated period.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Performance Indicator C.4.1.4. *The measures taken by IOSUD after the final decision of CNADTCU to withdraw the title of "doctor" following accusations of plagiarism have addressed all the aspects mentioned in CNADTCU's decision and in the current legislation.*

There seem to be no such cases in the evaluated period.
>   ***The indicator is fulfilled.***

Performance Indicator C.4.1.5. *The measures aiming to prevent academic fraud in the doctoral studies, taken by IOSUD, could be:*
a) Suspension of the right to advise newly enrolled doctoral students, for a period of 3 years, in the case of doctoral advisors having coordinated a doctoral thesis with a definitive decision of withdrawal of the "doctor" title for plagiarism;
b) Exclusion from the IOSUD of the doctoral advisor having coordinated at least two doctoral theses with definitive decisions of withdrawal of the "doctor" title for plagiarism;
c) Suspension of the right to organize the admission process of new doctoral students in the Doctoral studies domain, for a period of 2 years, if in the respective domain a doctoral thesis has been finalized and defended with a definitive decision of withdrawal of the "doctor" title for plagiarism.

These measures are in the plan of the IOSUD-UAI, to be implemented if necessary
>   ***The indicator is fulfilled.***

Performance Indicator *C.4.1.6. *The scientific reviewers members in the commissions for public defense of two or more doctoral theses with definitive decisions of withrawal of the "doctor" title for plagiarism, have not been nominated in other commissions for public defence of doctoral theses for a period of at least 3 years.*

Such a situation did not happen, therefore the above mentioned measure was not implemented.
>   ***The indicator is fulfilled.***

Performance Indicator C.4.1.7. IOSUD has a database open to the public containing all the *doctoral theses defended in the institution beginning at least in 2016 in a format including: the domain, author, doctoral advisor, title of the thesis and the thesis in electronic format (if there is an agreement of the author).*

>   The databasis exists.
>   ***The indicator is fulfilled.***

IV. SWOT Analysis

Strengths:	Weaknesses:
Well established programs, regionally and nationally. Clear rules and procedures. Quality of dissertations.	Mission of the PhD programs does not explicitly cover the third role of the university. Potential for internationalisation not fully used. Lack of funding for senior and junior research. No trainig for supervisors in supervision skills development.
Opportunities:	Threats:

Further development of quality of the programs. Fair and in line with the law studies and research. Relevant PhD research with the parameters to compete successfully nationally and beyond.			Narrowed conception of the doctoral studies. Regional/nationally bound studies without proper integration into the international context. Risks as for the quality of supervision process.	

V. Overview of judgments awarded and of the recommendations

No.	Type of indicator (PI, PI*, CPI)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
1.	A	**Institutional capacity**	**fulfilled**	*Consider the possibility of explicitly following all three main university pillars (teaching, research, public reach) within the mission and objectives of the doctoral studies at the UAI. Consider the possibility of providing an internal research grant scheme for senior academics in order to help them prepare better for external competition for research funding. Consider possibilities to develop internal research grant scheme in order for PhD students to focus on their own research projects and/or link them with senior research of their supervisors. Consider possibilities of the systematic training of supervisors in supervision skills.*
2.	B	**Educational effectiveness**	**fulfilled**	*Consider possibility to open PhD studies more to students from socially disadvantaged environments.*
3.	C	**Quality management**	**fulfilled (C.3 partially)**	*Consider possibilities of encouraging the PhD students to use opportunities for longer study stays at relevant foreign institutions. Consider possibilities to attract incoming international mobility students more effectively*

| | | | | *so that they get involved in the IOSUD-UAI activities. Make sure that visiting professors create a vital part of the offer of IOSUD-UAI across the domains. Consider possibilities to encourage the recruitment of promising external students in PhD studies at the IOSUD-UAI in a proactive manner.* |
| | | | | *Make sure there is sufficient proportion of PhD dissertations written in a relevant foreign language. Make sure a possibility to organize joint/double degrees is used effectively. Improve information about PhD study opportunities in the English version of the UAI's website.* |

VI. Conclusions and general recommendations

The programs under the evaluation are well established regionally and nationally and seem to have a potential for further development.

VII. Annexes

The timetable is attached as a separate document to this report.