

## **The External Evaluation Report of**

**"Victor Babeș" University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Timișoara (UMF Timișoara) (IOSUD)**

### Contents

- I. Introduction
- II. Methods used
- III. Analysis of performance indicators
- IV. SWOT Analysis
- V. Recommendations
- VI. Conclusions
- VII. Annexes

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

In this chapter, the following shall be summarized:

- the context in which this external evaluation report was drafted (**the type of evaluation, the period of the evaluation visit, the composition of the Experts Committee**, etc.);
- details about the institution organizing the doctoral studies (number of Doctoral Schools, number of students, institutional context, short history, etc.);

I was appointed as a Foreign External Evaluator for the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS) and invited to join the evaluation team for periodical external evaluation of "Victor Babeș" University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Timișoara (UMF Timișoara). This report is drafted based on a periodical external evaluation of the "Victor Babeș" University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Timișoara, organizing doctoral study programs (IOSUD). The evaluation of the institution was carried out under the terms of Article 132 para. (1) of Law No 1/2011, with subsequent amendments and additions, based on the provisions of Art. 13 let. a) - c) of the Government Emergency Ordinance No 75/2005 on the Quality Assurance of Education, approved by Law No 87/2006, with subsequent amendments and supplements.

Evaluation was carried out as a hybrid mode. The remote evaluation period of UMF Timișoara, in which I participated as an international expert, took place from 22 to 26 November 2021. The Evaluation director was Prof. Ioan Lascăr from Universitatea de Medicină și Farmacie „Carol Davila” din București. The Coordinator of the IOSUD committee was Prof. Laurențiu Mogoantă from Universitatea de Medicină și Farmacie din Craiova. Assoc. Prof. Sergul Duygulu (me) was the international expert from Hacettepe University, Alexandra-Simona Zamfir was PhD student expert from Universitatea de Medicină și Farmacie „Grigore T. Popa” din Iași and Prof. Daniela Ion from Universitatea de Medicină și Farmacie „Carol Davila” din București i was IOSUD Expert.

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<sup>1</sup> Each time when applicable the information shall be presented genderwise



The evaluation process started on Monday at 9.00 am (22/11/2021) with a preliminary online meeting to prepare and harmonize evaluation steps, in hybrid mode, of doctoral study domains and IOSUD. I have participated in all planned meetings with the team during the remote evaluation. The sessions were held with the institution's representatives and the Council for Academic Doctoral Studies (CSUD), IOSUD graduates and the director of CSUD/ directors of doctoral schools, and the team who drafted the internal evaluation report on Monday (22/11/2021). The online meetings were held with the members of the Ethics Commission, Commission for Quality Evaluation and Assurance (CEAC) members/ Quality Assurance Department, directors/ persons in charge of the research centers/laboratories within IOSUD, Doctoral University Studies Council (CSUD) and with members Doctoral Schools Council (CSD members) and Ph.D. students on Tuesday (23/11/2021). On Wednesday (24/11/2021), online meetings were held with employers of doctoral graduates and IOSUD academic staff. A technical meeting was also held to identify specific issues that need to be clarified during the on-site visit on Wednesday. On Thursday (25/11/2021), IOSUD evaluation activities continued independently. On Friday (26/11/2021), an online meeting of IOSUD/doctoral domains evaluation panels was held for the conclusions. The last meeting was held with representatives of the institution under review to discuss the findings of the evaluation process and the main recommendations. The online evaluation process was finished on Friday, October 26. The evaluation process was conducted in an open and collegial manner.

**Details about the institution organizing the doctoral studies (number of Doctoral Schools, number of students, institutional context, short history, etc.);**

The history of the UMF Timișoara dates back to 1944, when King Michael the First of Romania signed on the 31st of December 1944 the Decree-Law No. 660 regarding the establishment of the Western University of Timisoara. At this time, UMF Timișoara's academic specializations were Law, Philosophy, Science, Human Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Pharmacy, as well as Teology. The first document to mark the establishment of the Medical University of Timisoara was the Decree No. 104 from the 4th of May 1945. The document which actually led to the creation of the University of Medicine was the Law No. 361 from the 4th of May 1945, that modified the Decree Law referring to the founding of the Western University, due to the paramount necessity of professionally trained health specialists in this part of the country. The "Victor Babes" University of Medicine and Pharmacy Doctoral School began its activity, being organized as stated in the Government Decision No. 567 from the 15th of June 2005 in accordance with the Government Decision 567/2005's provisions.

The "Victor Babes" Univeristy of Medicine and Pharmacy is accredited as a University Doctoral Studies Organizing Intitution (IOSUD) to organize scientific doctoral studies pertaining to the domains of Medicine and Dental Medicine, as stipulated by the Minister Order No. 3855 from the 17th of May 2010. The Medicine and Dental Medicine Doctoral Schools pertaining to "Victor Babes" Univeristy of Medicine and Pharmacy are authorized to temporarily function, as asserted by the Minister Order No. 5382 from the 29th of September 2016, ART. 3.

The academic doctoral studies are organized by IOSUD UMF Timișoara in accordance with the Law of National Education No. 1/2011, Government Decision No. 681/2011 on the approval of the University Doctorate Studies Code and the Institutional Regulation for the organization and conduct of University Doctoral Studies. IOSUD UMF Timișoara organizes and coordinates scientific doctoral programs that last 4 years, through the two Doctoral Schools, the Doctoral School of Medicine-Pharmacy and the Doctoral School of Dental Medicine, in part-time and full-time form, according to the law. Following the completion



of the scientific doctoral studies and after the issuance of the order by the Minister of National Education and Scientific Research, IOSUD UMF Timisoara can award the diploma and title of doctor in sciences in the fields of Medicine, Dental Medicine and Pharmacy.

The “Victor Babes” University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Timisoara’s main mission is to contribute to society’s development, through education, scientific medical research, as well as promoting the universal values of culture. UMF Timisoara IOSUD’s mission is as follows: creating young, licensed researchers, able to use the utmost skills to create quality scientific knowledge; improvement of the university’s medium- and long-term strategy in terms of the development of doctoral studies and research. UMF Timisoara aims at exceling in at least two areas of research on a national scale (fundamental and translational research), increasing the number of post-university researchers working in the university’s research centers, developing the infrastructure necessary for scientific research activities and at increasing annual research revenues.

UMF Timisoara was evaluated by ARACIS twice (in 2007 and in 2014). Following both evaluations, UMF Timisoara was qualified as a high degree of confidence, according to the reports of the ARACIS Council on 29.07.2007 and 30.04.2014, respectively. UMF Timisoara was evaluated by the European University Association (EUA) according to the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) criteria.

UMF Timisoara ranked among the universities known for advanced research and education, having the right to organize bachelor's, master's and doctoral studies according to MECT, through UEFISCDI, classification of higher education institutions in Romania in 2011.

Total number of doctoral theses defended within the Doctoral School Medicine - Pharmacy during 01.10.2015 - 30.09.2020 - 151 doctoral theses (Medicine Domain - 149 defended theses, Pharmacy Domain 2 defended theses). Total number of doctoral theses defended within the Doctoral School of Dentistry during 01.10.2015 - 30.09.2020, Dentistry - 17 doctoral theses.

Currently, 83 PhD Leaders pertain to UMFVBT’S IOSUD Medicine-Pharmacy Doctoral School, namely to the Domain of Medicine, whereas 5 pertain to the Domain of Pharmacy. At the present moment, 505 PhD students are conducting their studies within the Medicine Domain of the Medicine-Pharmacy Doctoral School. Regarding the Domain of Pharmacy, there are 24 PhD students currently conducting their studies, and one student has temporarily suspended his study period.

Currently, 14 PhD Leaders pertain to UMFVBT’S IOSUD Dental Medicine Doctoral School, namely to the Domain of Dental Medicine. At the present moment, 87 PhD students are conducting their studies within the Dental Medicine Domain of the Dental Medicine Doctoral School.

## **II. Methods used**

Evaluation methodology was based on domains, criteria, standards, and performance indicators for the periodical external evaluation of IOSUD to support the improvement of IOSUD. The used methods and tools in the external evaluation process, before and during the evaluation visit, are given below:

### **Before evaluation:**

- The analysis of the internal evaluation report of the IOSUD UMF Timisoara and its Annexes;
- The analysis of data and information available on the IOSUD/Doctoral Schools’ website

### **During evaluation:**

- Meeting/discussions with doctoral students in the IOSUD;
- Meeting/Discussions with the graduates of the IOSUD;



- Meeting/Discussions with employers of the graduates of the IOSUD;
- Meeting/Discussions with the school officials of the IOSUD;
- Meeting/Discussions with the doctoral advisors affiliated with the IOSUD;
- Meeting/discussions with the representatives of the various structures of the IOSUD/Doctoral Schools
- The Council of the University Doctoral Studies (CSUD), The Council of the Doctoral School(s) (CSD), the Quality Assessment and Assurance Commission, the Quality Assurance Department, the Ethics Commission (including the student representatives of these structures);

### III. Analysis of ARACIS's performance indicators<sup>2</sup>

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

Under Domain A. Institutional Capacity, IOSUD's administrative structures and financial resources, research infrastructure, quality of human resources were analyzed. There were no unmet criteria and performance indicators in this domain. The institution has the necessary administrative structures, financial resources, and quality human resources to achieve its corporate vision, mission, goals, and objectives.

*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:*

IOSUD has implemented the effective functioning mechanisms provided for in the specific legislation on the organization of doctoral studies according to the internal evaluation report of the institution and the information obtained as a result of the online meetings held in the institution. A detailed analysis of these performance indicators is given below.

**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;*

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<sup>2</sup> Each time when applicable the information shall be presented genderwise



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 analyzing and approving proposals about 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 activity of the Doctoral Schools within the IOSUD UMF Timisoara is regulated by Institutional Regulation for the organization and functioning of doctoral studies at UMF Timisoara and the Regulations for Doctoral Schools within the UMF Timișoara.

There are methodologies for designating management structures and positions at CSUD and the Doctoral School which include the methodology regarding the designation and election of members of the Council for Doctoral Studies and the Council of the Doctoral School in the UMF Timișoara and the methodology regarding the election of the directors of the UMF Timișoara Doctoral School councils. In relation to the subject, the evidences of elections at CSUD/CSD level were provided in internal evaluation report of IOSUD of UMF Timișoara. Additionally, the methodology was confirmed in the interviews during online meetings.

Regarding the methodologies for organizing and conducting doctoral studies for the admission of doctoral students, for the completion of doctoral studies), there are the procedure for elaborating the doctoral study programs and the curriculum within the "Victor Babeș" University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Timișoara and procedure for completion of university doctoral studies. The methodology for completing doctoral studies at the "Victor Babeș" University of Medicine and Pharmacy in Timișoara is available at webpage of IOSUD.

UMFVBT's procedure regarding the recognition of THE PhD degree and the title of PhD graduate obtained abroad is available at the webpage of IOSUD. UMF Timișoara has the procedure regarding the automatic recognition of the quality of doctoral leader / habilitation obtained in accredited universities abroad.

The CSUD has one head (position obtained through a public contest), nine members (one of them was elected by vote) and one PhD student member (elected by vote). The Council of the Doctoral School of Medicine – Pharmacy is composed of one director, six members and 2 PhD student members (elected by votes). Council of the Doctoral School of Dental Medicine is composed of one director, three members, one member from Timișoara Polytechnic University and two PhD student members (elected by vote). IOSUD's regulations of management and provision of doctoral studies also include regulations regarding holding regular meetings of CSUD and CSDs. The internal evaluation report includes evidences of CSUD and CSD's regular meeting. This was also confirmed during the online meetings by the members of CSUD/CSDs.



PhD students are admitted to doctoral programs using a standard contract (Doctoral studies contract), which can be found on the University's website, according to their specific study Domain, and approved by the Board of Directors and the University Senate for each year of study.

There are mechanisms for analyzing and approving proposals about doctoral study programs based on advanced academic studies. Changes regarding the content of the program are made by CSD proposal, and CSUD approval only.

All the specific documents related to the doctoral studies are made public on the university website.

***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.*

The Regulation of UMFVBT's IOSUD Doctoral Schools, includes mandatory criteria, procedures and standards regarding aspects specified in Article 17, paragraph 5 of HG 681/2011:

- Chapter IV, Article 6 (1) and Chapter IV, Article 11 refers to the way in which new doctoral leaders are accepted, as well as regulations on how a doctoral leader may be excluded from the doctoral school.
- Chapter VI, Article 23 (1,2,3) and Article 24 refers to the mechanisms by which decisions are taken regarding the appropriateness, structure and content of the advanced university studies training program.
- Chapter IV, art.8 (1,2,3) refers to the procedures for changing the doctoral leader of a particular doctoral student and the procedures for mediation of conflicts.
- Chapter II, Article 4 (9) refers to the conditions under which the doctoral program may be interrupted.
- Chapter VI, Article 36 (1.2) refers to ways of preventing fraud in scientific research, including plagiarism.
- Cap V, Art 25 (1,2,3,4) references to the provision of research resources.
- Cap VI, Art 19 references to the frequency obligations of PhD students according to a methodology developed by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport.

***The indicator is fulfilled***



**Performance Indicator\* A.1.1.3<sup>3</sup>.** *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.*

- *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.*

It is clear from the evidence presented in internal evaluation report and interviews held during online evaluation that the Doctoral School of Medicine – Pharmacy and the Doctoral School of Dental Medicine of IOSUD-UMF Timișoara are organized on disciplines or disciplinary and interdisciplinary topics, in accordance with Art. 158, para. (7) of the National Education Law no. 1/2011 with subsequent amendments and completions.

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

According to the internal evaluation report of the institution and the information obtained as a result of the online meetings held in the institution, it was determined that the standard was met. The IOSUD has the logistical resources necessary to carry out the doctoral studies' mission. A detailed analysis of the performance indicators and related recommendation/s are given below.

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

- *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 record and academic background of doctoral students enrolled in Doctoral School of Medicine – Pharmacy and the Doctoral School of Dental Medicine of UMF Timișoara is archived and maintained using the RMU (Unique Matriculation Registry). It consists of all records of PhD students starting with the 2015-2016 study period, and contains information regarding personal data, schooling (students who have defended their theses, those expelled, those who interrupted their studies, those who prolonged their studies), form of financing, completion of PhD studies, as well as documents issued (diploma registry number). UMF Timisoara uses an excel database available by the staff of the Doctoral School Secretary's office. The excel database includes the function of "collection of raw data". Additionally, UMF Timișoara has carried out the procedure of acquisition of the Computerized Admission Program through contract

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<sup>3</sup> The indicators marked with an asterisk (\*) hold a special status, referring exclusively to the evaluation of doctoral schools, 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 fulfilled, the Agency extends a period of maximum 3 years to IOSUD to correct the respective deficiencies.



No. 1655 of 19.05.2021 to improve record and background of doctoral students through an effective IT technology.

***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.*

- *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 anti-plagiarism program used at the UMF Timisiora is Sistemantiplagiat to ensure the quality of the scientific research. The system recognized by MENCȘ. The plagiarism detection software is available to the entire academic community. All doctoral theses held within IOSUD UMF Timișoara (domain of Medicine, Dental Medicine, Pharmacy) are subject to antiplagiarism assesment. In order to use the software provided by Sistemantiplagiat.ro, the UMF Timișoara, renewed the contract with No. 1017 of 30.03.2021.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

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

According to the internal evaluation report of the institution and the information obtained as a result of the online meetings held in the institution, The IOSUD/doctoral schools have a modern research infrastructure to support the conduct of doctoral studies' specific activities, and it was determined that the standard was met. A detailed analysis of the performance indicators and related recommendation/s are given below.

***Performance Indicator A.2.1.1.*** *The IOSUD/the doctoral school(s) present proof of having rented adequate spaces for research activity specific to doctoral studies (laboratories, experimental fields, research stations, 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 doctoral students can carry out their scientific research activity in the research centers. There are 10 Advanced Research Centers and 39 Clinical and Methodology Specialty Centers. The Biobank is a special space designed for the storage in specific conditions of human and animal cells and tissues that can be used for research purposes, including for young doctoral students.





The CNFIS FDI 0498.2021 project established and developed the Base for practical research regarding medicinal plants, also approved by H.S. Nr.110/7332/31.03.2021, and the project employs PhD students from each field.

The research infrastructure and the offer of research services are presented publicly through the ERRIS profile platform. Additionally, the PhD students have access to the UMF Timișoara's modernized library. The library includes international databases. Access to the library is available on and off campus.

The evidence presented in the internal evaluation report and the clarifications in the interviews made during the online evaluation process showed that the university has sufficient infrastructure. UMF Timișoara presents proof of possessing the necessary spaces and the material base necessary for developing the quality conditions of doctoral university studies.

### ***The indicator is fulfilled***

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

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

There are collaboration agreements between UMF Timișoara and partner higher education institutions, national and international institutions, with the aim of increasing the quality of research and joint recognition of such research (CENTUM Technology Transfer Center- INCEMC, Partnership Agreement on the establishment of the University of Timișoara Alliance (ATU), Faculty of Science and Materials Engineering at the Polytechnic University of Bucharest, Norwegian University of Science and Technology Trondheim, Norway, (NTNU), University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Medicine, Novi Sad, Serbia, NYU, College of Dentistry, New York, USA, State University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Nicolae Testemitanu" Faculty of Dentistry, University of Kent, Canterbury, UK). The IOSUD signed several agreements with other institutions such as regarding the establishment of the Timisoara University Alliance (ATU) ( the first cooperation and consolidation structure of the university centre as well as the scientific research, development and innovation platform), establishing the UMF- G6 University Alliance (an alliance that aims to promote the interests of higher medical education, as well as to create a common framework of cooperation in the educational, scientific and extra-curricular fields). Since 2018, the FITOSCIENCE platform has been structured within the UMF Timișoara's IOSUD, through CNFIS FDI projects, regarding to the herbal bases. UMF Timișoara have collaborations with the University of Szeged (Hungary), Wright State University, Dayton (USA), the University of Lorraine (France), the Institute of Pharmacology and Toxicology Clinic of the Goethe University Frankfurt Main (Germany), and at the national level with the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Banat Timisoara, etc. The projects carried out at the pharmacotoxicological research laboratory also ensure collaboration with economic operators (S.C.FAVISAN. SRL-Lugoj). During the online interviews, both academic staff and doctoral students



expressed their positive thoughts about the agreements made by IOSUD. Based on the implementations and the actions taken, it has been concluded that this criterion has been met.

***The indicator is fulfilled***

***Performance Indicator A.2.1.3.*** *The IOSUD/doctoral school(s) proves that it is/are concerned with the permanent renewal of the research infrastructure to provide doctoral students access to updated research resources by applying to various funding competitions and using their university resources for acquiring new research infrastructure.*

- *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 IOSUD is constantly concerned with renewing the research infrastructure that provides doctoral students access to current research resources. IOSUD of UMF Timișoara provides permanent support for research funding through own-funded projects and renews the annual fixed asset base, including equipment and spare parts to ensure research logistics.

***The indicator is fulfilled***

**Criterion A.3. Quality of Human Resource**

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

At the level of each Doctoral School, there is sufficient qualified staff to ensure a quality educational process. According to the internal evaluation report of the institution and the information obtained as a result of the online meetings held in the institution, it was determined that the standard was met. A detailed analysis of the performance indicators and related recommendation/s are given below.

***Performance Indicator \*A.3.1.1.*** *The share of Doctoral advisors coordinating simultaneously more than eight doctoral students but not more than 12 during their doctoral studies<sup>4</sup> 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.*

It has been regulated by the senate decision (Decision No. 11/17694 from the 28th of November 2018 )

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<sup>4</sup> 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.



that the doctoral advisor can advise a maximum of 8 students at Doctorals Schools of UMF Timișoara. Within the field of PhD Medicine, there are 83 PhD advisors, none coordinating more than 8 doctoral students. Within the field of Doctoral Medicine Dental Medicine there are 14 PhD advisors and no doctoral advisor coordinates more than 8 doctoral students. Within the field of PhD Pharmacy, there are 5 PhD advisors and no doctoral leader coordinates more than 8 Doctoral students.

***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.***

- *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.*

Of the total of 83 PhD supervisors 71 doctoral supervisors (85,54%) in the field of Medicine have a full-time employment contract for an indefinite period with IOSUD. All PhD supervisors have a full-time employment contract with IOSUD in the fields of the Pharmacy (5 PhD supervisors) and dental medicine (14 PhD supervisors). Of the total of 102 doctoral supervisors in the fields of Medicine, Dental Medicine, and Pharmacy at UMF Timișoara's IOSUD 90 (88,24%) Phd supervisors hold a full time employment for an indefinite period with IOSUD. Given the proportion of doctoral advisors with full-time employment contracts, it was determined that this criterion was met.

***The indicator is fulfilled***

**Domain B. EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

Under Domain B. Educational Effectiveness; The number, quality, and diversity of candidates enrolled for the admission contest, the content of doctoral programs, the results of doctoral studies and procedures for their evaluation, quality of doctoral theses were analyzed through the internal evaluation report and external evaluation via online meetings. There were no unmet criteria and performance indicators in this domain.

**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.

According to the internal evaluation report of the institution and the information obtained from the online meetings held in the institution, it was determined that candidates admitted to doctoral studies demonstrate academic, research, and professional performance and are diversified as a social representation and by gender. The standard was met. A detailed analysis of the performance indicators is given below.



**Performance Indicator \*B.1.1.1.** Admission to doctoral study programs is based on selection criteria including previous academic, research, professional performance, interest in science 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.

According to the internal evaluation report, between 2015 and 2020, the admission to University Doctoral Studies was organized in accordance with the admission regulations approved by the University Senate, and in accordance with current legislation. Currently, admission to the University Doctoral Studies is carried out in accordance with the UMF Timișoara Methodology regarding the organization of admission to doctoral studies, 2021-2022. There is also UMF Timișoara's Methodology regarding project assessment for obtaining doctoral grants, program GD 2021. The criteria for admission to the doctoral studies includes an examination of linguistic competence, the submission of projects for obtaining doctoral grants, an interview with the doctoral leader and a committee aimed to evaluate the the candidate's level of knowledge regarding specialized bibliography, the problems pertaining to the specific filed, as well as the candidate's interest for research on the chosen topic, the research work carried out by the candidate, publishing activity, research work presented at international and national conferences and published in summary in magazines with ISSN or ISBN and the ability to analyze, synthesize and design, to undertake creative activities, structuring and interpreting results; formulation and argumentation of personal opinions.

**The indicator is fulfilled.**

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

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

There are implementations of stimulating the enrollment of doctoral students from disadvantaged social environments for Doctoral Admissions. UMF Timișoara allocates vacancies specifically for Roma doctoral students, by exempting them from the tuition fee, without a doctoral grant. In this context, a doctoral student of Roma ethnicity was enrolled in the Doctoral School of Dentistry in 2019. In addition, in order to encourage future doctoral students to pursue their doctoral studies at UMF Timișoara, the tuition fee for the academic year of 2020-2021 has been reduced from 5000 lei to 3000 lei according to the Regulation



on the amount of tuition fees and other fees within UMF Timișoara. Additionally, IOSUD of UMF Timișoara aims to carry out research projects supporting students from disadvantaged social background to pay the tuition.

The school drop-out rates for the last five years (2015-202) for each domain ranges between 0% and 9,26%. The drop out rate pertaining to the domain of Medicine, dental medicine and pharmacy does not exceed 30 %. There is a regulation of IOSUD for preventing school drop-out. It was approved for Doctoral students to request to postpone the payment of the tuition fee. In the statements made by the institution, it was also stated that starting from the 2022-2023 university year, CSUD will encourage a series of meetings with doctoral students to create a precautionary plan to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Recommendation:

it is recommended to examine the reasons for PhD students' dropping out and make the support systems that will prevent the withdrawal of PhD students from the program more visible.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

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

The training program based on advanced university studies is appropriate for improving doctoral students' research skills and strengthening ethical behavior in science. Considering the internal evaluation report of the IOSUD and the opinions of the teaching staff, students, graduates, it was decided that the standard was met. A detailed analysis of the performance indicators is given below.

***Performance Indicator B.2.1.1.*** *The training program based on advanced academic studies includes at least three 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 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.*

The training programs are based on advanced academic studies. According to the 2016-2020 Education Plan for three PhD domains, (Medicine, Dental Medicine, Pharmacy), the Methodology of Scientific Research and Biostatistics disciplines are part of the training program. Education plans for 2016 – 2020 are provided at [http://old.umft.ro/oferta-educationala\\_117](http://old.umft.ro/oferta-educationala_117). The education program by advanced university studies includes mandatory and optional disciplines. The mandatory disciplines are methodology of scientific research, ethics in scientific research, biostatistics, documentation, drafting and publication of scientific articles, design and management of grants, ethics and academic integrity. The optional disciplines include Experimental models in translational research, communication, oral presentation and presentation of posters, modern techniques in medical and pharmaceutical research, bioinformatics and



genomics applied in medical research, medicine and evidence-based research and evidence-based medicine.

***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.*

The education program by advanced university studies includes twelve disciplines (6 mandatory and 6 optional disciplines) relevant to scientific research training, one being dedicated to an in-depth study of methodology of scientific research. There are also two subjects on ethics in scientific research and ethics and academic integrity in mandatory disciplines. It is seen that ethical issues are adequately covered in the curriculum, and students will gain sufficient depth in this field.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

- *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 training program organized within the Doctoral Schools aims the PhD students acquire the knowledge, professional and transversal skills, responsibility, and autonomy as a result of the study disciplines and research activities, through training programs based on advanced university studies. The list of the knowledge, professional and transversal skills, objectives/outcomes and competences for each domain is given in the internal evaluation report.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

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



Standard B.3.1. Doctoral students capitalize on the research through presentations at scientific conferences, scientific publications, technological transfer, patents, products, and service orders. IOUSUD's doctoral students capitalize on the research through presentations at scientific conferences, scientific publications, technological transfer, patents, products, and service orders. Considering the internal evaluation report of the IOSUD and the opinions of the teaching staff, students, graduates, it was decided that the standard was met.

**Performance Indicator B.3.1.1.** *For the doctoral school, there are in place mechanisms for verification of the results of doctoral studies in accordance with the specificity of the particular domain (i.e., technological 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 at national and international conferences, publication of research results in national and international publications, engaging doctoral students in writing research-development projects, etc.)*

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

There are mechanisms in place to verify the results of doctoral studies specific for each domain at the IOSUD level (e.g., presentations at national and international conferences, publishing articles/papers in high-impact journals, making the Ph.D. students part of advanced research projects - development projects). According to the internal evaluation report, IOSUD of UMF has research activity leading to the granting of the patents. There are four patents issued by OSIM and OEM between the years 2019-2021. According to the internal evaluation report, clarifications the IOSUD provided during the evaluation period the PhD students publish their doctoral studies in national and international journals, and also present their studies in national and international conferences, symposiums, etc. Additionally, the IOSUD of UMF Timișoara held project competitions for young researchers.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

#### **Criterion B.4. Quality of doctoral theses**

Standard B.4.1. Doctoral theses fulfill high-quality standards  
IOUSUD's doctoral theses fulfill high-quality standards. Considering the internal evaluation report of the IOSUD and the opinions of the teaching staff, students, graduates, it was decided that the standard was met. A detailed analysis of the performance indicator is given below.

**Performance Indicator B.4.1.1.** *At the level of IOSUD, the percentage of theses non-validated, at the level of General Counsel 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 five years.*



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

During the period between 2015–2020, there were no invalidated doctoral theses conducted in UMF Timișoara's IOSUD Doctoral Schools, without the right to restore and resume the process of public presentation, at the level of the CNATDCU General Council.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

### **Domain C. QUALITY MANAGEMENT**

Under the Domain C. Quality Management; Existence and periodic implementation of the internal quality assurance system, transparency of information and accessibility of learning resources, internationalization and system for assurance of ethical and academic integrity, were analyzed considering the internal evaluation report and the results from meetings during the remote external evaluation of the IOSUD UMF Timișoara. However there were some critical performance indicators were partially met. The criteria and performance indicators that are partially met in this area and the recommendations regarding the subject are explained in detail below.

#### **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 to monitor internal quality assurance.

There are the institutional framework and procedures to monitor internal quality assurance and relevant internal quality assurance policies. As a result of the analyzes made from the assessed institution's documents and the online evaluation visit itself, it was decided that the standard was met. A detailed analysis of the performance indicators and related recommendation/s are given below.

***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 in various events, publication of papers, etc.) and counseling 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.*





Regular assessments of doctoral advisors' scientific work are conducted within the Doctoral Schools, according to the IOSUD -UMFVBT Doctoral Leadership Assessment Sheet and the quality assurance procedure issued by the CSUD.

PhD students from the Doctoral Schools of Medicine, Dental Medicine and Pharmacy can carry out research activities in the IOSUD of UMF Timișoara research center. It is determined that the technical-material infrastructure has been constantly improved, the research laboratories equipped with modern equipment and facilities have allowed to increase both the quality of the educational process and the quality of scientific research, and the members of the disciplines in the research centers have published studies in journals in international databases. The spaces and material equipment of the doctoral schools of UMF Timișoara IOSUD enable the conduct of research activities in the fields of Medicine, Dental Medicine and Pharmacy. The research infrastructure and the offer of research services are made publicly through the ERRIS profile platform. Doctoral students can access the UMF Timișoara library with access to international databases.

The activity of the Doctoral Schools within IOSUD of UMF Timișoara is regulated by the Institutional Regulation for the organisation and functioning of doctoral studies at UMF Timișoara, Regulation of the UMF Timișoara Doctoral School, Methodology regarding the designation and election of members of the Council for University Doctoral Studies and the Council of the Doctoral School, Methodology regarding the election of directors of the UMF Timișoara Doctoral School Councils, UMF Timișoara's Procedure for the elaboration of doctoral degree programs and curriculum, Procedure for completion of university doctoral studies, UMF Timișoara's Procedure regarding the recognition of THE PhD degree and the title of PhD graduate obtained abroad, UMF Timișoara's Procedure for automatic recognition of the status of doctoral leader/habilitation obtained in accredited Universities abroad, UMF Timișoara's Methodology regarding the organization of admission to doctoral degree cycles, 2021-2022, UMF Timișoara's Methodology of completion of doctoral studies.

IOSUD of UMF Timișoara It has been determined that IOSUD provides publication support to motivate and encourage doctoral students. The amount of publication support varies according to the indexes in which the article is published. IOSUD also pays for funded (from national, international, non-refundable competitions) projects. Ninety percent of the revenue received from fee-paying Doctoral students is allocated for the organization and functioning of the Council for University Doctoral Studies (CSUD) of the Organizing Institution of University Studies of Doctorate. University Senate approves modification of tuition fees for doctoral studies, according to the Senate Decision. Other supports are provided to the doctoral students such as scholarships, performance scholarships or excellence scholarships, award of internal research grants, according to the HCA.

### ***The indicator is fulfilled***

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

- *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.*



CSUD elections take place according to Methodology regarding the designation and election of members of the Council for University Doctoral Studies and the Council of the Doctoral School. The PhD students organize elections for the position of representative member of the Doctoral students on the Council for University Doctoral Studies Board, according to the minutes dated the 6th of November 2020. The information is made public so that all students are informed. Election procedures were also confirmed during online meetings by the students.

***The indicator is fulfilled***

***Performance Indicator C.1.1.3.*** *Students' associations and, according to the case, representatives of students organize 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.*

- *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.*

CSD elections take place according to the Methodology regarding the designation and election of members of the Council for University Doctoral Studies and the Council of the Doctoral School and The methodology regarding the election of the directors of the doctoral school councils in the “Victor Babeş” University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Timișoara. PhD students, members representing PhD students on the Doctoral School Council, organize elections as according to the following minutes. The information is made public so that all students are informed. Election procedures were also confirmed during online meetings by the students

***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 stimulate the scientific and academic performance of 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.*

Strategies and procedures planned and implemented at the doctoral school as measures to continuously improve the quality of doctoral programs are provided in the internal evaluation report. The strategies are given below.

- Within the UMFVBT's IOSUD doctoral schools, through voted and implemented regulations and procedures, use ongoing mediation strategies and policies, stimulating scientific and academic performance.
- Conferences with prestigious guests are held for PhD students
- The current rules and regulations are watchfully reconsidered when necessary, as well as the application of information about national strategies.



- PhD students receive advice and guidance.
- Doctoral schools have had various strategic development plans in the past. The CSUD is currently debating an action policy strategy to address shortcomings and boost scientific and academic performance in collaboration with the two CSDs. The plan for the implementation of the treaties was discussed at the CSUD meetings in 2021 and will be implemented through the following decisions of the administration and senate.

According to the activities and regulations carried out by IOSUD, this criterion is met.

***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 information of interest to doctoral students, future candidates, and public interest is electronic via the website. The standard was met, and the detailed analysis of the performance indicator is given below.

***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 to attend conferences, publish articles, award scholarships, etc.*

*(j) 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.*

UMF Timișoara web site is developed in three languages including Romanian, English and French. The published information UMF Timișoara website includes the IOSUD/doctoral school regulation, the admission rules, the doctoral studies contract, the regulation for the completion of studies, including the procedure for public support of the thesis, the content of training programmes based on advanced university studies, academic and scientific profile, domain research themes of the Doctoral advisors, as well as their institutional contact data, the list of doctoral students in the school with basic information (year of registration, doctoral advisor), the standards for the elaboration of the doctoral thesis at UMF



Timișoara, as well as rules for drafting the doctoral thesis, information on opportunities for PhD students, such as attending conferences, publishing articles, attaining scholarships grants, etc. and links to the summaries of the doctoral thesis to be publicly supported, as well as the date, time, location where they will be supported, at least 20 days before the support.

It has been determined that the transparency and access to specific information regarding the internal quality assurance system for internal and national beneficiaries is quite good. The development of the web page in three languages was also considered as a strength. However, it has been determined that this information is mostly available in Romanian and there are limitations in the availability of this information for international beneficiaries, and the English web page of IOSUD does not contain sufficient information.

*Recommendation:*

Providing necessary (even if not all) information in English on the webpage of IOSUD is recommended.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

The UMF Timișoara doctoral students have access to the resources needed for conducting doctoral studies as a library, databases, and research infrastructure. A detailed analysis of the performance indicators and related recommendation/s are given below.

***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.*

Through research centers and direct involvement of CSUD and CSDs, PhD students are supported in the conduct of academic research and development. The UMF Timișoara has a well-equipped library that can be accessed both remotely and on-campus. All doctoral students have access to a platforms (Liberty 5 and eBibliophil) providing academic databases relevant to the doctoral studies domain of their thesis. These platforms provides students to search of spesipic data. The University has also made agreements with other institutions so that PhD students and academic staff can access the necessary literature for their research (ANELIS PLUS Project 2020, ATU Alliance, the Timișoara University Alliance, the G6-UMF Alliance). Positive feedback also obtained in interviews with UMF graduates, PhD students and academic staff showed that this criterion was met.

***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.*

All doctoral theses conducted are subjected to antiplagiarism assessment and the antiplagiarism procedure according to the Senate Decision. All doctoral students have access, upon request, to an electronic system ([www.sistemantiplagiat.ro](http://www.sistemantiplagiat.ro)) to verify the degree of similarity with their doctoral thesis. However the process of validating students' other work was not transparent. In online interviews, it has been determined that the similarity program is mainly used for doctoral theses.

*Recommendations:*

Increasing doctoral students' awareness about the anti-plagiarism program and encouraging the use of the program for other artistic or scientific works is recommended.

***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.*

In UMF Timișoara's IOSUD, PhD students from the Doctoral School of Medicine and Pharmacy and the Doctoral School of Dental Medicine, all have access to advanced research centers and methodological and research centers. The research centers operate according to the Regulation on the establishment, recognition and operation of the UMFVBT centers. There is also a decision of the Board of Directors of UMF Timișoara to support and guide doctoral students whose advisors are not part of the research centers. Feedbacks received from students, academic staff and graduates in online interviews showed that the criterion was met.

***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.

The IOSUD/Doctoral school has a strategy to increase the internationalization of doctoral studies. The institution's internal evaluation report, the presented evidence, and the interviews conducted during the online visit demonstrated that there are implemented strategies. However there were some critical performance indicators were partially met under the "Criterion C.3. Internalization". The detailed analyzes are presented below.

***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 to increase the number of doctoral students participating in 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.*

IOSUD of UMF Timișoara stimulates the increase of the number of collaboration agreements with national and international universities and research institutes, where doctoral students to carry out a part of their research activity in the field of interest, as well as the dissemination of the obtained results, to be presented at international prestigious events. In this context, the UMF Timișoara has mobility agreements with 32 universities from countries of Europe such as Italy, France, Germany, Belgium, Portugal, Spain, Hungary etc. The mobility agreements are valid at making the self-assessment report applicable to cycle III studies in Annex. According to the clarifications of IOSUD of UMF Timișoara the percentage of the doctoral students who have completed a traineeship abroad or some other forms of mobilities in last five years is 42,26% for dental medicine domain. Eleven doctoral students of pharmacy domain out of 29 students (representing 37.9%) attended international scientific conferences. 14% of PhD students in the field of Medicine have completed a training period abroad or another form of mobility, such as participation in international scientific conferences. Although the pandemic in the last two years has affected student mobility, it has remained below the expected rate for international mobility and training of PhD students in the field of medicine.

#### *Recommendations:*

It is recommended to establish support mechanisms for students to present their studies in scientific events abroad, to support the mobility of PhD students in the domain of medicine within the scope of Erasmus agreements, and/or to develop and implement strategies that support students' learning abroad. It is also recommended to establish a system that will regularly monitor and evaluate the participation of doctoral students in national and international scientific 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.*

- *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.*

UMF invites lecturers from abroad (from countries such as Canada, United Arab Emirates, Austria, Moldova) to give lectures, conferences, etc. The activities carried out in this context are as follows: A symposium was held in 2016, in which international experts took part, and a training days activity was



held in 2019. At the same time, 2 doctoral students have international joint advisors. International experts took part in 2 doctoral thesis defense committees. International experts took part in the project evaluations of the UMF Timișoara.

*Recommendations:*

Increasing the number of activities regarding invitation of leading experts to deliver courses/lectures for doctoral students should be recommended.

***The indicator is fulfilled.***

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

- *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 the level of IOSUD UMF Timișoara's doctoral schools, 15 of the doctoral theses out of 168 defended were written in English. It is seen in the additional clarifications of the institution that there have been 3 such thesis pertaining to the Medicine-Pharmacy Doctoral School, and there has been 1 such thesis pertaining to the Dental Medicine Doctoral School regarding the joint supervision of doctoral theses conducted between October 2015 and September 2020. Cumulating a percentage of thesis conducted with international co-supervision or are written in English is 11,3%. Since this rate is over 10%, the indicator has been met.

*Recommendations:*

IOSUD should continue to provide support for the organization of doctoral studies in international co-tutelage.

***The indicator is 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<sup>6</sup>, 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.*

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<sup>6</sup> Doctoral studies are completed by presenting the doctoral thesis in public session in front of a committee whose members hear and judge the final public presentation of the thesis



IOSUD took some actions such as activities within the Doctoral Schools are internationalized through PhDs conducted in joint international supervision, cooperation agreements between PhD supervisors, PhD students and other institutions abroad. Another important aspect is the involvement of foreign researchers in the evaluation PhD students' project funding. There is also a regulation regarding travel, accommodation expenses reimbursement aims to support collaboration, as well as the FDI internationalization projects. The UMF Timișoara provides supports for attending important educational fairs for promoting doctoral programs. While some internationalization activities have been carried out and some results have been achieved, the promotional activities of UMF Timișoara should be improved.

*Recommendations:*

Improving 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*) should be recommended.

***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

As a result of the analyzes made from the assessed institution's documents and the online evaluation meetings, it was decided that the standard was met. IOSUD/Doctoral school has a functional and efficient system for prevention and assuring ethical and academic integrity norms. A detailed analysis of the performance indicators and related recommendation/s are given below.

***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 positioning, studies, analyses, or measures are 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 are made public yearly or whenever it becomes necessary.*





Considering the current implementations of IOSUD, it is noticeable that verification and control mechanisms to prevent fraud in academic activity, research, or any other activity; plagiarism and the practices; 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 are precise. All these practices are provided for, analyzed and sanctioned as according to the “Institutional Regulation for the organization and functioning of the doctoral university studies within the “Victor Babeș” University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Timișoara, “Regulation of the Doctoral Schools within the University of Medicine and Pharmacy “Victor Babeș” University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Timișoara” and “Anti-plagiarism regulations”. The IOSUD continuously monitors and evaluates these practices and demonstrate their application for all activities carried out and the involvement of students in all these processes, and the results of the monitoring are made public annually or whenever necessary.

***The indicator is fulfilled***

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

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

According to the internal evaluation report of IOSUD, all intimations regarding suspicion of plagiarism related to doctoral theses have been analyzed and resolved by the IOSUD within the time interval legally established for expressing in writing its position regarding the intimation received. This information was also confirmed during interviews. This implementations are regulated by a procedure, the Institutional Regulation for the organization and functioning of the doctoral university studies within the “Victor Babeș” University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Timișoara and the regulation of the Doctoral Schools within the University of Medicine and Pharmacy “Victor Babeș” University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Timișoara.

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



To the present date, there has been no such case. This fact is confirmed in the University Ethics Committee Reports (given in Annex 72). This information was also confirmed during the online meetings.

***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.*

- *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 measures are taken by IOSUD following the final decisions of the CNATDCU to withdraw the doctor's degree following the plagiarism notifications covered all the aspects provided in the CNATDCU decision and the legislation in force. The newly proposed procedures, as well as the Doctoral School permanent regulations („The Institutional Regulation for the organization and functioning of the doctoral university studies within the “Victor Babeş” University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Timișoara” and „Regulation of the Doctoral Schools within the University of Medicine and Pharmacy “Victor Babeş” University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Timișoara”) forbid such aspects (Annex 73). There have been no cases of withdrawal of the doctorate from UMF Timișoara to the present date.

***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 three 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 two 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.*

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

There is a procedure (Annex 73) which includes IOSUD of UMF Timișoara's specific measures to prevent academic fraud related to university doctoral studies. Additionally, measures to prevent academic fraud in the doctoral studies taken by IOSUD are specified in “The Institutional Regulation for the organization and functioning of the doctoral university studies within the “Victor Babeş” University of Medicine and



Pharmacy from Timișoara” and „Regulation of the Doctoral Schools within the University of Medicine and Pharmacy “Victor Babeș” University of Medicine and Pharmacy from Timișoara”. The measures specified in procedure and the regulations include suspensions of doctoral supervisors (suspension of the right to advise newly enrolled doctoral students, exclusion from the IOSUD, suspension of the right to organize the admission process of new doctoral students in the Doctoral studies domain, etc.).

In the case of the final decisions of the CNATDCU to withdraw the doctoral title following the plagiarism notifications, IOSUD will apply the aspects provided in the CNATDCU decision under the legislation in force.

***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 withdrawal of the "doctor" title for plagiarism have not been nominated in other commissions for public defense of doctoral theses for at least three years.***

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

Regulations in case of definitive decisions of CNATDCU to withdraw the Ph.D. degree includes measures to scientific reviewers who were part of the commissions for public support of doctoral theses with a final decision to withdraw the doctoral degree for plagiarism. There has been no such case to the present date.

***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).***

- *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 doctoral theses have been reported since 2016, according to current legislation, and have been uploaded to the national database, platform. They are available in accordance with current legislation.

***The indicator is fulfilled***

#### **IV. SWOT Analysis**

<b><u>Strengths:</u></b>	<b><u>Weaknesses:</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are control mechanisms to improve the development of processes</li> <li>• Providing funding support to young researchers</li> <li>• Financing through internal resources of an essential part of doctoral research through internal grants and projects</li> <li>• The effective leadership and motivation of administrators to improve the quality of doctoral studies</li> <li>• There is a modern research infrastructure of the university to support the conduct of doctoral studies' specific activities and have national and international agreements for using various research infrastructures</li> <li>• Existence of efforts to raise funds from internal and external sources for the renewal of research infrastructure</li> <li>• The University has a large number of Ph.D. supervisors of IOSUD, and their scientific quality</li> <li>• Doctoral supervisors have publications in high impacted journals and existing patent applications</li> <li>• There is an extensive library</li> <li>• There is a mechanism to encourage the students to publish (providing financial support etc.)</li> <li>• A strong relationship with employers of graduates.</li> <li>• The UMF Timișoara has many international agreements.</li> <li>• Receiving PhD students' feedback</li> <li>• There are post-doctoral scholarship opportunities</li> <li>• The PhD students have unlimited access to the internet, cloud and databases</li> <li>• The potential of graduates to use high technology in their workplaces</li> <li>• Variety of research areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty in doctoral students' research during the pandemic</li> <li>• The similarity system is used only for doctoral theses, not for other artistic or scientific works of students</li> <li>• Limited digitalization in the processes</li> <li>• A small number of international Ph.D. students</li> <li>• Limited internalization activities</li> <li>• Limited opportunity for the international mobility activities of the dental medicine PhD students.</li> <li>• Inconsistent tuition fee</li> </ul>

<b><u>Opportunities:</u></b>	<b><u>Threats:</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existence of the programs that can provide national and international funding for research</li> <li>• Existing regulations for the organization of doctoral studies in the country</li> <li>• Increase in employment rates of doctoral graduates at the national and international level, increase in the number of research-oriented institutions</li> <li>• Many institutions, research centers, laboratories, etc., can be cooperated throughout the country for doctoral studies.</li> <li>• Evidence-based health practices are becoming more valuable every day, and there is a need for doctoral graduates who will produce evidence</li> <li>• There are a variety of international exchange opportunities for the students and doctoral supervisors among European countries and around the world</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limitation of research competitions for the fields of Dentistry and Pharmacy</li> <li>• Poor funding through doctoral grants, respectively institutional development grants</li> <li>• The low quotas are given to Exchange programs at the institutional level</li> <li>• A limited number of workplaces that allow graduates of doctoral programs to work with a research focus</li> <li>• Unpredictable legislation, with numerous changes regarding the doctoral studies</li> <li>• Lack of projects of human resource development for doctoral research</li> <li>• Migration of health sciences graduates to institutions and labor market of other countries</li> <li>• There is no legal regulation for joint-supervision</li> </ul>

## V. Overview of judgments awarded and of the recommendations

No.	Type of indicator (*, C)	Performance indicator	Judgment	Recommendations
1	C	A.1.1.1.	Fulfilled	-
2	C	A.1.1.2.	Fulfilled	-
3	*	A.1.1.3 <sup>7</sup> .	Fulfilled	-
4	C	A.1.2.1.	Fulfilled	-

<sup>7</sup> The indicators marked with an asterisk (\*) hold a special status, referring exclusively to the evaluation of doctoral schools, 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 fulfilled, the Agency extends a period of maximum 3 years to IOSUD to correct the respective deficiencies.

5	C	A.1.2.2.	Fulfilled	-
6	C	A.2.1.1.	Fulfilled	-
7	C	A.2.1.2.	Fulfilled	-
8	C	A.2.1.3.	Fulfilled	-
9	*	A.3.1.1.	Fulfilled	-
10	C	A.3.1.2.	Fulfilled	-
11	*	B.1.1.1.	Fulfilled	-
12	C	B.1.1.2.	Fulfilled	it is recommended to examine the reasons for PhD students' dropping out and make the support systems that will prevent the withdrawal of PhD students from the program more visible.
13	C	B.2.1.1.	Fulfilled	-
14	C	B.2.1.2.	Fulfilled	-
15	C	B.2.1.3.	Fulfilled	-
16	C	B.3.1.1.	Fulfilled	-
18	C	B.4.1.1.	Fulfilled	-
		C.1.1.1.	Fulfilled	-
19	C	C.1.1.2.	Fulfilled	-
20	C	C.1.1.3.	Fulfilled	-
21	*	C.1.1.4.	Fulfilled	-
22	C	C.2.1.1.	Fulfilled	Providing necessary (even if not all) information in English on the webpage of IOSUD is recommended.
23	C	C.2.2.1.	Fulfilled	
24	C	C.2.2.2.	Fulfilled	Increasing doctoral students' awareness about the anti-plagiarism program and encouraging the use of the program for other artistic or scientific works is recommended.
25	C	C.2.2.3.	Fulfilled	-
26	*	*C.3.1.1.	Partially fulfilled	It is recommended to establish support

				mechanisms for students to present their studies in scientific events abroad, to support the mobility of PhD students in the domain of medicine within the scope of Erasmus agreements, and/or to develop and implement strategies that support students' learning abroad. It is also recommended to establish a system that will regularly monitor and evaluate the participation of doctoral students in national and international scientific activities.
27	C	C.3.1.2.	Fulfilled	Increasing the number of activities regarding invitation of leading experts to deliver courses/lectures for doctoral students should be recommended.
28	*	*C.3.1.3.	Fulfilled	IOSUD should continue to provide support for the organization of doctoral studies in international co-tutelage.
29	C	C.3.1.4.	Partially fulfilled	Improving the internationalization of activities carried out during the doctoral studies is supported by IOSUD through concrete measures (e.g., by <i>participating in educational fairs to attract international doctoral students; by including international</i>

				<i>experts in guidance committees or doctoral committees, etc) should be recommended.</i>
30	C	C.4.1.1.	Fulfilled	-
31	C	C.4.1.2.	Fulfilled	-
32	C	C.4.1.3.	Fulfilled	-
33	C	C.4.1.4.	Fulfilled	-
34	C	C.4.1.5.	Fulfilled	-
35	*	*C.4.1.6.	Fulfilled	-
36	C	C.4.1.7.	Fulfilled	-

*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! No weakness can be identified without formulating at least one recommendation regarding the way it could be corrected!*

## **VI. Conclusions and general recommendations**

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

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

This report is based on my experiences. I hope that this report I have prepared will improve the institution's quality assurance processes of doctoral education. According to the analysis of the IOSUD UMF Timișoara internal evaluation report, report annexes, web page, clarifications the IOSUD provided after online meetings and the results obtained from different meetings during the remote evaluation, it has been determined that the critical standards under institutional capacity, educational effectiveness, and quality management have been met. However, my recommendations for improving the quality assurance processes of doctoral education at the level of IOUSUD UMF Timișoara are presented below:

- *Encouraging students to use the similarity system for other existing scientific or artistic works.*
- *Completing the establishment of new IT infrastructure for monitoring the doctoral students and creating mechanisms for evaluating its effectiveness*
- *Making support systems more visible to prevent withdrawal of students from the program.*
- *Evaluating the effectiveness of the international agreements*
- *Increasing the number of jointly elaborated theses*
- *Increasing the number of theses written in English and/or with co-supervision*





- *Improving 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)*
- *Providing funding more opportunities for doctoral students' research and improving material base*
- *Providing support to the students who will conduct their research in other research centers outside the institution*
- *Implementation of increased digitalization in all processes*
- *Maintaining relations with graduates through more structured mechanisms*
- *Establishing more structured relationships with employers*
- *The functioning and responsibilities of existing commissions should be clearer.*
- *Implementation of strategies to increase state budgeted project support*
- *Taking process facilitating measures (follow-up of technical works, simplifying bureaucratic processes, etc.)*
- *Providing more opportunities to bring together groups of experienced PhD students and new PhD students*
- *Improved accessibility of the advisory committee and doctoral school administration to students*

At the end of my report, I would like to thank the Rector of UMF Timișoara, the entire management, the university staff, students, graduates, graduates' employers for creating a collaborative environment during the meetings. I also thank IOSUD evaluation director-Prof Ioan Lascăr, IOSUD committee coordinator-Prof. Laurențiu Mogoantă, Ph.D. student evaluator- Alexandra-Simona Zamfir, and IOSUD expert evaluator- Prof. Daniela Ion and the other domains' evaluators for the environment they have created for effective teamwork during the external evaluation. Lastly, I would like to extend my special thanks to ARACIS for inviting me as an international expert to the external evaluation of IOSUD of UMF Timișoara, and thanks to Vlad Popescu for his kind support throughout the process.

**Assoc. Prof. Sergul DUYGULU**  
**International Expert of ARACIS**  
**Hacettepe University Faculty of Nursing**  
**Ankara/Turkey**  
**November 30, 2021**

## **VII. Annexes**

*The following types of documents shall be attached:*

- *The detailed schedule of the evaluation visit – MANDATORY.*
- *The survey questionnaire was applied to doctoral students or academic staff affiliated to the IOSUD 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(s)/IOSUD website prove specific claims in the report, accompanied by the date they were accessed and saved.*

- *Any other documents relevant to the evaluation process referred to in the report.*