

**Substantive Change Report**  
**by Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education**  
**(ARACIS)**

Register Committee

Ref. RC/C84

Ver. 1.0

Date 2022-09-29

Page 1 / 2

Decision of:	2022-09-22
Report received on:	2022-08-04
Agency registered since:	2009-03-01
Last external review report:	June 2018
Registration until:	2023-09-30
Absented themselves from decision-making:	Not applicable

Attachments:

1. [Substantive Change Report, 2022-08-04](#)
2. [Annex Mapping ESG, 2022-08-04](#)

1. The Register Committee considered the Substantive Change Report of 2022-08-04.
2. The Register Committee noted that the starting with the new evaluation cycle, the periodic evaluation of institutions organising doctoral study programmes (IOSUD) will be carried out as part of the institutional evaluation process. In the previous cycle, the evaluation of institutions organising doctoral study programmes (IOSUD) and the periodic evaluation of doctoral study domains (DSD) were performed together by ARACIS.
3. In the new evaluation cycle, starting with May 2022 ARACIS introduced a new external quality assurance activity for the *evaluation of the establishment of new doctoral study domains*.
4. The Committee noted that ARACIS continues its practice of publishing on its website all related documentation on *the evaluation for the establishment of a new doctoral study domain* i.e. guides, methodology, criterial, standards and performance indicators (ESG 2.3).
5. Compared to the periodical evaluation of doctoral study domains, the performance indicators for the *external evaluation for the establishment of a new doctoral study domain* is more limited in its coverage (see annex). Some indicators related to the way in which the learning and teaching and research activities should have been implemented are eliminated as not applicable for initial study programmes (ESG 2.1).
6. The methodology has been developed together for all three forms of doctoral evaluation involving a large consultation of stakeholders. The

Committee took note that for the establishment of new doctoral studies or study domains a smaller number of performance indicators is employed, so as to reduce the burden on higher education institutions as well.

## Register Committee

Ref. RC/C84

Ver. 1.0

Date 2022-09-29

Page 2 / 2

7. The Register Committee understood that the new activity follows the same evaluation steps, the same decision making and uses the same processes in the selection of experts as employed in the *periodical evaluation of doctoral domains* (ESG 2.3, ESG 2.4, ESG 2.5).
8. **Considering that the new activity is a result in the expansion of an existing procedures for the evaluation of doctoral studies or doctoral study domains, the Register Committee had no concerns that the ESG are complied with in this new activity.**

## EQAR Substantive Change Report

Reference #	23170827
Status	Complete
Agency #1	Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
Agency acronym	ARACIS
Expiry date #1	30/09/2023
Contact #1	Daniela-Cristina Ghițulică
Phone #1	+40 21 206 76 02
Email #1	<a href="mailto:cristina.ghitulica@aracis.ro">cristina.ghitulica@aracis.ro</a>
Other organisations?	No
A. Has the organisational identity of the registered agency changed?	No
B. Has the organisational structure changed?	No
C. Changes in EQA activities	1. One or several new external QA activities were introduced
Description new/changed	<p>Evaluation of third cycle (doctoral) university studies.</p> <p>The evaluation of doctoral studies is a new external evaluation activity, performed by the agency, that was previously mentioned as in preparation - see Agency Annual update from 14.06.2021.</p> <p>The Law of National Education no. 1/ 2011 (<a href="https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/EN_National-Education-Law_no-1_2011_June-2021.pdf">https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/EN_National-Education-Law_no-1_2011_June-2021.pdf</a>) mentions, at article 158, that doctoral studies can be organized by institutions following accreditation and periodical evaluation, and only for study domains that at their turn have</p>

passed such an external evaluation process. The last change to the law, in what it concerns external evaluation processes for doctoral studies, was passed on 1 April 2021 (Emergency Ordinance no. 22/2021 regarding the modification and completion of National Education Law no. 1/2011 and of Emergency Ordinance no. 75 / 2005 regarding Education Quality Assurance: <https://lege5.ro/Gratuit/gu3tknzqgmza/ordonanta-de-urgenta-nr-22-2021-privind-modificarea-si-completarea-legii-educatiei-nationale-nr-1-2011-si-a-ordonantei-de-urgenta-a-guvernului-nr-75-2005-privind->). Consequently, on 20 April 2021, the Methodology on conducting the evaluation of university doctoral studies ([https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Order-3651\\_2021-and-Annex-1\\_Methodology-evaluation-of-university-doctoral-studies.pdf](https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Order-3651_2021-and-Annex-1_Methodology-evaluation-of-university-doctoral-studies.pdf)) was revised and approved by Ministerial Order no. 3651/ 2021. The Agency developed evaluation Guides (<https://www.aracis.ro/self-assesment-report-guide-doctoral-evaluation/>), as follows:

- on conducting the process of periodic evaluation of doctoral study domains...

---

... (<https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/EN-Guide-on-conducting-the-process-of-Evaluation-of-Doctoral-Study-Domains.pdf>), respectively

- of periodic evaluation of institutions organizing doctoral study programs (<https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/EN-Guide-on-the-process-of-External-Evaluation-of-an-IOSUD.pdf>),

- for carrying out the external quality evaluation process for the setting up (establishment) of a new doctoral study domain (<https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/>

Guidelines-for-external-evaluation\_setting-up-a-new-doctoral-study-domain.pdf)

The periodical evaluation of all doctoral study domains and institutions organizing doctoral study programs in Romania have to be concluded by 31 December 2021, and, for the current cycle, the evaluation of institutions organizing doctoral study programs and of all doctoral study domains within institutions organizing doctoral study programs are performed altogether. Starting the next periodical evaluation, the evaluation of institutions organizing doctoral study programs will be performed within the institutional evaluation, as one of the components of the university.

The Guides are similar to those in place for evaluation of study programs, respectively for evaluation of institutions, in terms of:

- organization - the evaluation of doctoral study programs is done at domain of studies level, similar to master programs;

- domains of evaluation and criteria, as defined by the Emergency Ordinance no. 75/2005 on education quality assurance ([https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/EN\\_Emergency-Ordinance-no-75\\_2005-on-QA\\_June-2021.pdf](https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/EN_Emergency-Ordinance-no-75_2005-on-QA_June-2021.pdf)),

- steps in...

- ... evaluation;

- composition of the evaluation experts panel;

- publication of reports.

Consequently, it is not an external evaluation developed from scratch, but it is based on the Agency previous experience of evaluating institutions and study programs. The follow-up procedures are nevertheless strengthened, all institutions organizing doctoral study programs

---

and doctoral study domains have to pass a follow-up procedure after three years, no matter if the outcome of the evaluation was of compliance or non-compliance.

The external evaluation activity for institutions organizing doctoral study programs and periodic evaluation of doctoral study domains started in May 2021, and the first external evaluation report was approved by the Agency Council on 29.07.2021; the reports and the decision of the Council are available here: <https://www.aracis.ro/evaluarea-periodica-a-iosud/>.

In the case of the establishment of a new doctoral study domain the external evaluation activity started in May 2022 and the first external evaluation report was approved by the Agency Council on 26.05.2022; the reports and the decision of the Council will be available at the above-mentioned link.

---

## 1. New EQA activity:

---

1

Evaluation of third cycle (doctoral) university studies: periodical evaluation of institutions organizing doctoral study programs (IOSUD) and of doctoral study domains (DSD); evaluation for the establishment of a new doctoral study domain

---

**Focus**

study programmes or higher education institutions

---

**ESG 2.1**

Mapping against European Standards and Guidelines Part 1 of criteria, standards and performance indicators for external evaluation of institutions organizing doctoral study programs and doctoral study domains and for the establishment of a new doctoral study domain according to Ministerial Order no. 3651/ 2021, Annexes 3 and 2 (see links below, at Standard

---

2.3).

Please see the uploaded table at the end of this Form.

The number of performance indicators for the external evaluation for the establishment of a new doctoral study domain is lower to that corresponding to periodical evaluation, the indicators considering aspects related to the way in which the learning and teaching and research activities should have been implemented being eliminated, as not applicable.

Such indicators are considering elements like the way in which the funds were used and whether additional funds were attracted, the number of students coordinated by each professor, profile of enrolled students, dropout rate, the process of guidance of the doctoral students, the ration between the number of enrolled students and number of professors assuring guidance, results of research activities within the doctoral studies and evaluation practices, internationalization.

---

## ESG 2.2

The Methodology on conducting the evaluation is the result of a long process of consultations with the Higher Education Institutions, the National Council of Rectors, students' federations and representatives of teachers' unions, that took place between 2017 and 2021. All versions were available on Agency website. A first version was developed in 2017 with support from World Bank experts, based on international best practices. In 2018, a working group was constituted, with representatives of the categories of stakeholders mentioned above, in order to develop the performance indicators through a co-creation process. Finally, the legislative modifications realized in April 2021 led to a simplification of the evaluation process that allowed the development of a simplified methodology, so the

---

implementation could start in May 2021. A smaller number of performance indicators was established – 36 for institutions, 35 for domains, 20 for establishment of a new DSD, so that the burden on higher education institutions to be reduced. It is also important to mention that, for the first cycle of evaluations, 3 years were given to universities to fulfill some of the indicators, taking into consideration that practically these are referring to a 5 years period in the past, so the universities weren't aware of some of the indicators beforehand. Thus, institutions are allowed to show improvement of their activities, during a follow-up evaluation after 3 years. The internal quality assurance processes are considered. Upon completion of the first external evaluation cycle eventual directions for a more flexible process will be identified.

---

### ESG 2.3

---

1	Annex 1 MO 3651/ 2021 - Methodology on conducting the evaluation of university doctoral studies: <a href="https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Order-3651_2021-and-Annex-1_Methodology-evaluation-of-university-doctoral-studies.pdf">https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Order-3651_2021-and-Annex-1_Methodology-evaluation-of-university-doctoral-studies.pdf</a>
2	Annex 2 MO 3651/ 2021 - SYSTEM of the criteria, standards and performance indicators DSD: <a href="https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Order-3651_2021_Annex-2-Domains.pdf">https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Order-3651_2021_Annex-2-Domains.pdf</a>
3	Annex 3 MO 3651/ 2021 - SYSTEM of the criteria, standards and performance indicators IOSUD: <a href="https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Order-3651_2021_Annex-3-IOSUD.pdf">https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Order-3651_2021_Annex-3-IOSUD.pdf</a>
4	Guides on conducting the process of Periodic

---



External Evaluation of DSD and IOSUD and new DSD: <https://www.aracis.ro/self-assessment-report-guide-doctoral-evaluation/>

---

**ESG 2.3**

NOT APPLICABLE

---

**ESG 2.4**

The experts' panel: national expert(s) – academics; doctoral students for institutions organizing doctoral study programs, for doctoral study domains whenever possible, and international experts:

- institutions: a mission director (member of Agency Council); a coordinator at institution level (member of academic staff from National Register of Evaluators, doctoral advisor); one doctoral student (member of National Register of Student Evaluators); one expert evaluator for each fundamental science domain (academic member of Register, doctoral advisor); an international expert (member of International Evaluators' Register).
- domains: one or two experts evaluators (member of academic staff listed in Register, doctoral advisor in the same doctoral study domain as the one undergoing evaluation); an international expert (member of Register); one student (member of Register).

All experts are members of the Agency National Register of Evaluators: <https://www.aracis.ro/registrul-national-al-evaluatorilor/>. The members of Register are selected based on open calls, following specific criteria. The national experts and the students are also passing an evaluation test in order to be part of the Register.

External Quality Evaluation Department (for institutions) or Accreditation Department (for domains) appoints the Experts' Panel, on proposals from the Permanent Specialty Commissions of the agency.

---

Before each evaluation mission starts, online trainings of reviewers are organized, with the participation of all panel members for institutions and domains evaluation within a Higher Education Institution. Dedicated trainings were organized for the national experts (March 2021), for the members of the...

... Permanent Specialty Commissions (February and March 2021) and for the students (March and July 2021).

---

**ESG 2.5**

The same principles and procedures used for institutional, study programs and master studies domains are applied.

---

**ESG 2.6**

1

<https://www.aracis.ro/evaluarea-periodica-a-iosud/>

---

**ESG 2.7**

The procedures of complaints (<https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Procedura-de-sistem.-Solutionarea-petiilor-reclamatii-sesizari-COMPLAINTS-P.S.-03-ARACIS.pdf>) and appeals (<https://www.aracis.ro/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Procedura-operationala.-Solutionarea-contestatiilor-depuse-de-institutiile-de-invataman-superior-APPEALS-P.O.-10-ARACIS.pdf>) are the same as for the other external evaluations performed by the Agency. They are also explained in the Guides (<https://www.aracis.ro/self-assesment-report-guide-doctoral-evaluation/>).

---

**ESG 3.4/ESG 3.6**

The evaluation of doctoral studies for other 43 Higher Education Institutions is in progress. Evaluation of doctoral studies shall make the object of a dedicated thematic analysis, in 2022, after all institutions organizing doctoral study programs and doctoral study domains will be

---

evaluated by the end of 2021.

---

**D. Activity outside the scope of the ESG**

No

---

**File #1**

[ARACIS\\_Mapping\\_against\\_ESG\\_Part\\_1\\_of\\_criteria\\_IOSUD\\_and\\_DSD.pdf \(122 KB\)](#)

---

**Submit form?**

I am ready to submit the change report form

---

**Last Update**

2022-08-04 10:23:01

---

**Start Time**

2022-08-04 09:42:12

---

**Finish Time**

2022-08-04 10:23:01

---

**IP**

193.231.2.8

---

**Browser**

Firefox

---

**Device**

Desktop

---

**Referrer**

<https://www.eqar.eu/>

---

**Mapping against ESG Part 1 of criteria, standards and performance indicators for external evaluation of IOSUD and DSD according to OM Ministerial Order no. 3651/2021, Annexes 3 and 2 (see links at ESG 2.3)**

ESG Part 1	Annex 3 (IOSUD)			Annex 2 (DSD)		
	Criteria	Standards	Performance indicators	Criteria	Standards	Performance indicators
1.1	A.1 C.1	A.1.1 C.1.1	A.1.1.1 A.1.1.2 C.1.1.1 C.1.1.2 C.1.1.3	A.1 C.1	A.1.1 C.1.1	A.1.1.1 A.1.1.2 C.1.1.1 C.1.1.2
1.2	A.1 B.2	A.1.1 B.2.1	A.1.1.1 A.1.1.3 B.2.1.1 B.2.1.2	A.1 B.2	A.1.1 B.2.1	A.1.1.1 B.2.1.1 B.2.1.2 B.2.1.5*
1.3	B.2 B.3 B.4	B.2.1 B.3.1 B.4.1	B.2.1.3 B.3.1.1 B.4.1.1	B.2 B.3	B.2.1 B.3.1	B.2.1.3 B.2.1.4* B.3.1.1* B.3.1.2*
1.4	A.1 B.1 B.3 B.4 C.4	A.1.1 B.1.1. B.3.1 B.4.1 C.4.1	A.1.1.1 B.1.1.1 B.1.1.2 B.3.1.1 B.4.1.1 C.4.1.1 C.4.1.2 C.4.1.3 C.4.1.4 C.4.1.5 C.4.1.6 C.4.1.7	A.1 B.1 B.3	A.1.1 B.1.1 B.1.2 B.3.1 B.3.2	A.1.1.1 B.1.1.1* B.1.2.1 B.1.2.2* B.3.1.1* B.3.1.2* B.3.2.1* B.3.2.2*
1.5	A.3 C.3	A.3.1 C.3.1	A.3.1.1 A.3.1.2 C.3.1.1 C.3.1.2 C.3.1.3 C.3.1.4	A.3 C.3	A.3.1 A.3.2 C.3.1	A.3.1.1 A.3.1.2 A.3.1.3 A.3.1.4* A.3.2.1 A.3.2.2 C.3.1.1* C.3.1.2* C.3.1.3*
1.6	A.1 A.2 B.2 C.1 C.2	A.1.2 A.2.1 B.2.1 C.1.1 C.2.2	A.1.2.1 A.1.2.2 A.2.1.1 A.2.1.2 A.2.1.3 B.2.1.3 C.1.1.1 C.2.2.1	A.1 A.2 B.2 B.3 C.1 C.2	A.1.2 A.1.3 A.2.1 B.2.1 B.3.2 C.1.1 C.2.2	A.1.2.1 A.1.2.2 A.1.3.1* A.1.3.2* A.1.3.3* A.2.1.1 B.2.1.3 B.2.1.4*

			C.2.2.2 C.2.2.3			B.3.2.1* B.3.2.2* C.1.1.1 C.1.1.2 C.2.2.1 C.2.2.2 C.2.2.3
1.7	A.1 C.2	A.1.2 C.2.1	A.1.2.1 A.1.2.2 C.2.1.1	A.1 C.2	A.1.2 C.2.1	A.1.2.1 A.1.2.2 C.2.1.1
1.8	C.2	C.2.1	C.2.1.1	C.2	C.2.1	C.2.1.1
1.9	C.1	C.1.1	C.1.1.4	C.1	C.1.1	C.1.1.2

\* The indicator that does not apply to the procedure of carrying out the external quality evaluation process for the establishment of a new doctoral study domain.