



REGULATION

ON THE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION

OF ARACIS



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CHAPTER I - General provisions

Art. 1. (1) The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education - ARACIS, with its registered office in Bucharest, no. 59, Mărăști Boulevard, district 1, is an autonomous public institution of national interest, a legal entity having its income and expenditure budget. ARACIS is fully funded through its revenues.

(2) ARACIS operates according to the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 75/2005 on education quality assurance, as further amended and supplemented; the Law of National Education no. 1/2011, as further amended and supplemented, and other applicable regulations in this field.

(3) In its activity, ARACIS has in view to comply with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG).

Art. 2. (1) The mission of ARACIS is to contribute to quality assurance in higher education, nationally and in the member states of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), mainly through evaluation and external quality assurance activities provided for education-providing organisations operating in Romania and for Romanian education providers legally operating in other countries, according to the laws in force.

(2) In carrying out its mission, ARACIS works with the Ministry of Education (MoE), the National Scientific Research Council (CNCS), the National Council for Attestation of University Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates (CNADTCU), or other institutions and bodies that have responsibilities in this field. Furthermore, ARACIS consults and works with stakeholders in higher education, such as student federations, the National Council of Rectors (CNR), trade unions and employers' organisations, employers, professional associations etc.

Art. 3. ARACIS is funded by its own revenues generated as follows:

- from service contracts for quality evaluation and assurance in higher education, concluded with national and foreign education providers, and with the MoE or with international partners;
- external non-reimbursable funding sources, obtained by participating in national/international projects/programmes, donations, sponsorships, as well as and other legally constituted sources.

Art. 4. (1) ARACIS is registered in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (**EQAR**) and periodically undergoes the international external evaluation process required for maintaining this registration.

(2) ARACIS is a full member of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (**ENQA**) and periodically undergoes the international external evaluation process required for maintaining this status.

(3) ARACIS may also be a member of other international organisations or networks of quality assurance in higher education.



CHAPTER II - Duties of ARACIS

Art. 5. ARACIS has the following duties:

- develops and regularly reviews the Methodology and standards for the provisional authorising/accreditation of study programmes/domains and higher education institutions, which are endorsed by the MoE and approved by Government Decisions or by orders of the minister of education, as applicable;
- drafts and regularly reviews, based on best practices, national reference standards and performance indicators for evaluation and quality assurance in the higher education system;
- drafts, regularly reviews and publishes its procedures/guides/documents concerning external evaluation and assurance of education quality and related to the Agency's activity;
- concludes service contracts with national and foreign education institutions for the external evaluation of the quality of education programmes/domains and providers, and for the inter-institutional evaluation of similar programmes;
- evaluates, based on—the standards and Methodologies approved by Government decisions, upon request or when requested by the MoE, and proposes the provisional authorising or the accreditation of higher education providers and their study programmes/domains. The evaluation activity is completed through a report based on which the MoE drafts the normative documents by which higher education structures and higher education study programmes/domains are established;
- performs quality evaluation for higher education study programmes/domains and institutions, when requested by the MoE, and the terms related to carrying out the evaluation activities are established by contract;
- publishes the results of external evaluations;
- works with the Ministry of Education and the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education (ARACIP), and with the National Authority for Qualifications (ANC) to draft and promote policies and action strategies to improve the quality of education in Romania;
- organises annual consultations with higher education institutions and representatives of the students and the social-economic environment, to establish the priorities for the quality assurance mechanisms;
- publishes manuals, guides, summaries of best practices in quality evaluation and quality assurance;
- periodically (every three years) drafts system analyses on the quality of higher education in Romania;
- collaborates with similar agencies in other countries to develop and implement efficient actions to improve the quality of study programmes in higher education;
- analyses and approves the methodology and terms of reference used by other EQAR-registered agencies in external evaluation activities for education providers in Romania, and validates the related evaluation report;
- develops and implements *the Code of ethics and rules of conduct in the activities carried out by ARACIS regarding the quality assurance and assessment in higher education in Romania*;
- publishes an annual report on its activity;
- draws up self-assessment reports on the quality of its activity in preparation of the external evaluation regarding compliance with the ESG;



- performs other duties, according to the laws regulating higher education.

Art. 6. To carry out its duties, ARACIS has the following rights:

- to use external collaborators, from Romania or from abroad, working under an individual service contract, experts in the activity field of ARACIS, remunerated according to the law, as transposed in the norms approved by the ARACIS Council;
- to constitute, based on a transparent methodology and using competence and competitiveness criteria, its own register of evaluators, whom it shall train on a methodological basis and delegate for performing external quality evaluation missions;
- to check, at the end of the evaluation mission, compliance with the evaluation methodology applied by the evaluators;
- to inform the evaluated institution and the Ministry of Education about the results of the external evaluation.

CHAPTER III - Organisational structure of ARACIS

Art. 7. The organisational structure of ARACIS includes:

- the Council
- the Executive Board of the ARACIS Council (EB)
- the External Quality Evaluation Department
- the Accreditation Department
- Permanent working structures:
 - I. the Permanent (Speciality) Experts' Commissions
 - II. the Commission of Institutional Evaluation for Managerial and Financial Activities
 - III. the Consultative Commission
 - IV. the Disciplinary Commission
 - V. the Ethics Commission
 - VI. the Monitoring Commission
- the Technical Staff, composed of four speciality directions, coordinated by a General Director, and three structures, directly subordinated to the Agency's President:
 - I. *Speciality directions:*
 - a) Quality Assurance Direction
 - b) Economic Direction
 - c) Organisation, IT, Human Resources and Public Procurement Direction
 - d) International Relations, Projects, Cooperation and Research Direction
 - II. *Structures subordinated to the Agency's President:*
 - a) Public Internal Audit Compartment
 - b) Legal and Internal Quality Assurance Office
 - c) President's Cabinet (organised as an office).
- National Register of Expert Evaluators (RNE), including:
 - I. the National Register of Expert Evaluators (teaching staff)
 - II. the National Register of Student Expert Evaluators
 - III. the Register of International Expert Evaluators
 - IV. the Employers' Register

Art. 8. (1) ARACIS is led by a 21-member *Council*, out of which 17 members are teaching staff; 2 students, representatives of student federations of Romania; one employers' representative, and one representative of the trade union with the highest number of members in higher education.



(2) The decisions of the ARACIS *Council* are carried out by the permanent working structures, the technical staff led by the General Director, the structures subordinated to the President, and the members of the National Register of Expert Evaluators.

(3) The duties of the technical staff are established upon the proposal of the directors of the speciality directions, in line with the regulations in force, endorsed by the *Executive Board*, and approved by the ARACIS *Council*. In certain circumstances (e.g. non-attendance due to objective reasons), the duties of a member of the technical staff are delegated to another employee, upon the proposal of the director, the head of service etc., with the approval of the ARACIS President.

(4) The total number of positions pertaining to the technical staff is 93, out of which 16 management positions. These are outlined in the list of positions, which makes **annex 2** to this *Regulation on the Organization and Operation of ARACIS*.

(5) The relationships between the General Director, the four speciality directions, the services, compartments and offices of the technical staff are included in the organisational chart of ARACIS, which is an integral part of the Regulation, presented in **annex 1**.

Art. 9. The ARACIS Council establishes the level of allowances for its members, the salaries for the technical staff, according to the list of positions and its own wage grid, approved by the Council, as provided by the law, and the monetary entitlements for the activities performed by the evaluators and external collaborators.

CHAPTER IV - The ARACIS Council, the Executive Board and the departments - operation and duties

THE ARACIS COUNCIL

Art. 9. (1) The Council is the collective leading body of ARACIS, which ensures the programmatic direction of ARACIS, under the terms of the law.

(2) The ARACIS *Council* is organised and operates independently of any ideological, political, religious or other interference.

Art. 10. (1) The members of the ARACIS Council are tenured university professors or associate professors, with an individual employment contract concluded for an indefinite period, with experience in education quality assurance.

(2) Rectors may not be members of the ARACIS *Council* while they are in office. If a member of the ARACIS *Council* becomes a rector, they lose their mandate as an ARACIS *Council* member as of the date of confirmation by order of the Minister of Education, according to art. 211 para. (1) of Law no. 1/2011, as further amended and supplemented.

(3) Persons who hold public office may not be members of the *Council* while in that office. If a member of the ARACIS *Council* is appointed in public office, they lose their mandate as a member of the ARACIS *Council* as of the date of their appointment.

(4) The Council members work based on a 4 (four)-year contract signed with the Agency, except for student members, for whom the contract duration is 1 (one) year.

(5) Council members may not cumulate more than 2 (two) mandates.

Art. 11. (1) Council members are selected based on professional and moral prestige criteria, on principles of professional and scientific competence, through a contest, according to own procedures approved by the ARACIS Council and published prior to initiating the contest.

(2) Every 4 years, the ARACIS Council is renewed by organising a public contest, as a rule, for 1/3 of the number of member mandates on the ARACIS Council. Students are reconfirmed at the beginning of every academic year.



(3) To become members of the ARACIS Council, students are selected based on an evaluation grid among the candidates delegated by the student federations that are nationally active in Romania, which, through their articles of association, undertake representation of all students in Romania and bring together student organisations from diverse study domains.

Art. 12. (1) The ARACIS Council shall be chaired by a President and a Vice-President, elected by secret ballot by a majority of the Council members. Their mandate may not exceed the duration of the contract they signed as members of the ARACIS Council.

(2) The President of the ARACIS Council appoints the director of the *Accreditation Department*, the director of the *External Quality Evaluation Department*, and the Secretary General.

(3) The ARACIS Council has an *Executive Board* composed of a President and a Vice-President, the Secretary General, the director of the *Accreditation Department* and the director of the *External Quality Evaluation Department*.

Art. 13. (1) The ARACIS Council meets monthly in an ordinary meeting and whenever necessary in extraordinary meetings, convened by the President or the Vice-President when the President is not present.

(2) The meetings take place in the presence of at least two thirds of the total number of members and are led by the President or, when the President is not present, by the Vice-President or the Secretary General.

(3) The meetings of the ARACIS Council are usually attended in person by the Council members but they may also be held online, provided that the requirement in para. (2) or art. 13 is complied with.

(4) The Council meetings may be attended by the directors of the speciality directions of the technical staff, who will act as guests and have no voting rights and by other people invited by the President, as applicable, for the purpose of solving any specific issues. The General Director is a permanent guest at the ARACIS Council meetings.

(5) The discussions and the decisions passed in the Council are recorded in the meeting minute.

Art. 14. (1) The members of the ARACIS Council may perform evaluation activities and coordinate the activities of experts' panels, according to the distributions approved by the Council upon the proposal of the *Executive Board*.

(2) The members of the ARACIS Council, except for the President, Vice-President and Secretary General, are members of one of the two departments of ARACIS.

(3) The members of the ARACIS Council perform activities to guide the permanent experts' commissions and attend the meetings of such commissions. The Council delegates the members of the ARACIS Council to participate in commissions' activities, according to each member's field of competence when possible.

(4) ARACIS Council members may represent the Agency in international quality assurance bodies or in national/international activities: projects, seminars, conferences etc.

Art. 14¹. (1) ARACIS Council members who do not have housing in Bucharest are entitled to reimbursements on their expenses with:

- a) their two-way travel between the place where the higher education institution where they are tenured professors or students, as applicable, and Bucharest, where ARACIS has its headquarters, based on a travel order approved by the President of the ARACIS Council or their replacement, and the relevant supporting documents;
- b) accommodation during the travel according to letter a).

(2) The entitlements provided for in para. (1) are also for the union representative and the employers' representative who are members of the ARACIS Council, while they carry out their Council mandates, in case they do not have any housing in Bucharest.



Art. 15. (1) The ARACIS *Council* carries out the following main duties:

- reviews, proposes changes to and approves the draft institutional strategy of ARACIS and the annual operational plans developed by the *Executive Board* of the ARACIS Council, as well as the institution's position regarding topics of public interest related to the Agency's field of activity;
- develops the accreditation standards, the reference standards and the performance indicators for quality evaluation and assurance in higher education, as well as the evaluation methodologies, which it presents to the Ministry of Education to be passed through Government decisions and, respectively, through ministerial orders;
- coordinates the development of the Guides and procedures for quality evaluation and assurance in higher education;
- approves procedures regarding the optimal operation of the ARACIS structures;
- approves the changes of the *Regulation on the organization and operation of ARACIS*, when such changes are required for strategic or functional reasons and approves the relocation of the institution's headquarters;
- develops and carries out training programmes for expert evaluators;
- approves the procedures for member selection and operation of the permanent working commissions, upon the proposal of the *External Quality Evaluation Department* or the *Accreditation Department*;
- approves the procedures for constituting the National Register of Expert Evaluators, upon the proposal of the *External Quality Evaluation Department* or the *Accreditation Department*;
- upon the proposal of the *External Quality Evaluation Department* or the *Accreditation Department*, approves the schedule of the evaluation and/or accreditation missions and the membership of the experts' panels;
- approves the accreditation reports and the external quality evaluation reports drafted by the *Accreditation Department* and, respectively, the *External Quality Evaluation Department* based on the reports drafted by the Permanent Speciality Experts' Commissions and, respectively, the expert evaluator panels;
- drafts the accreditation reports and the external quality evaluation reports and sees to their publication on the ARACIS website;
- approves the *Code of ethics and rules of conduct in the activities carried out by ARACIS regarding the quality assurance and assessment in higher education in Romania*;
- approves the participation of ARACIS as a promoter, partner or associate in national or international projects aligned with the mission of ARACIS;
- coordinates the drafting and approves the publication of internal quality evaluation guides/manuals, best practice guides for internal and external quality evaluation, studies and research work, synthesis papers, etc. made at ARACIS;
- conducts meetings with the Permanent Speciality Experts' Commissions to review and improve their work;
- annually approves the draft budget of ARACIS, bi-annually reviews the budget execution and the income and expenditure accounts and has competence for approving changes, periodically, depending on the priorities emerged in carrying out the activities of ARACIS;
- analyses and controls the activity of the *Executive Board* between two meetings, and proposes improvements for such activity;
- approves the *Annual activity report of ARACIS*, which is subsequently published on the ARACIS website;
- drafts the self-assessment reports of ARACIS for the international reviews of the Agency's activity;



- decides on the affiliation of ARACIS to international bodies and organisations;
- by open ballot, elects the president of the *Ethics Commission* and one member of this Commission from among the members of the Council. The third member of the *Ethics Commission* is approved by the ARACIS Council upon the proposal of the students' federations, from among the students who are members of the Council. The fourth member of the *Ethics Commission* is the representative, in the Council, of the trade union with the highest number of members in higher education. The fifth member of the *Ethics Commission* will be appointed by the ARACIS Council from among the permanent staff of the Agency.
- analyses and adopts decisions regarding the resolutions concerning the cases of infringements on the provisions of the *Code of ethics and rules of conduct of ARACIS*, upon the proposal of the *Ethics Commission*;
- proposes the enforcement of the sanctions stipulated in the *Code of ethics and rules of conduct of ARACIS*, as applicable;
- performs other duties related to quality assurance, within the limits of the provisions of the law.

(2) If the institution or the study programme subject to evaluation employs one or several members of the ARACIS Council or spouses, relatives or kins up to the third degree, those members of the ARACIS Council do not participate in those evaluation procedures.

(3) In carrying out its duties, the ARACIS Council adopts decisions with a simple majority of votes of the total number of members, usually by secret ballot, and issues decisions, which are signed by the President or the Vice-President, when the President is not present, and published on the ARACIS website.

(4) Exceptionally, the *Council* may adopt decisions by voting electronically, using e-mail messages or electronic platforms.

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF THE ARACIS COUNCIL

Art. 16. (1) *The Executive Board* adopts decisions regarding the current activity of ARACIS, between the Council meetings or according to the mandate given by the Council, and supervises the Agency's operation and the implementation of the Council's decisions.

(2) The Executive Board is constituted as per art. 12.

(3) It meets in ordinary meetings which take place usually weekly and in extraordinary meetings whenever necessary, convened by the President or the Vice-President when the President is not present.

(4) The meetings are conducted with at least 3 members of the Executive Board present, chaired by the President or the Vice-President and usually in person.

(5) The meetings of the Executive Board may be attended by the directors of the speciality directions of the technical staff, who will act as guests and have no voting rights, and by other people invited by the President, as applicable, for the purpose of solving any specific issues. The students who are members of the ARACIS Council and the representative of the trade union with the highest number of members in higher education are permanent guests in the meetings of the *Executive Board*.

(6) As a rule, decisions are passed by open ballot, with a simple majority of the attending members. The decisions of the *Executive Board* are signed by the President or the Vice-President when the President is not present.

(7) The meetings of the *Executive Board* may be held online as well, subject to the requirement in para. (4) of art. 16, namely, in exceptional circumstances, decisions may be adopted by e-mail as well.

(8) The discussions and the decisions adopted by the *Executive Board* are recorded in the meeting minute.



Art. 17. The *Executive Board* has the following main duties:

- coordinates the carrying out of the decisions of the ARACIS *Council* by the technical staff and the permanent working structures;
- reviews and endorses the draft budget of ARACIS to be approved by the ARACIS *Council* upon the proposal of the General Director;
- with the support of the technical staff, develops and proposes to the *Council* for approval the strategy and the annual operational plans;
- endorses the external evaluation and accreditation methodology and standards and, respectively, the standards of reference and the list of performance indicators for higher education institutions and other education providers, for the various types of study programmes/domains, upon the proposal of the *Accreditation* and *External Quality Evaluation Departments*, and submits them to the *Council* for approval;
- develops and proposes to the *Council* for approval the methodology for the contest held for the staffing of the vacancies in the ARACIS *Council*;
- develops criteria for selecting the national and international evaluators that may be involved in the experts' panels;
- reviews the appeals submitted by the education providers in evaluation and quality assurance activities and decides on initiating the appeal review procedure and on the membership of the appeals commission;
- reviews the requests of the higher education institutions to initiate master's programme evaluation procedures and decides on the master's programmes to be evaluated;
- reviews the requests of the higher education institutions to initiate doctoral school and doctoral domain evaluation procedures and decides whether all requirements are met;
- validates the evaluators' reports based on the internal report on checking compliance with the evaluation methodologies, and communicates the experts' decision and its own report to the members of the ARACIS *Council*;
- supervises the preparations for the monthly meetings of the ARACIS *Council*;
- reviews the complaints of third parties regarding infringements on the ethics rules, and decides on notifying the *Ethics Commission*;
- reviews the solutions and the draft resolutions proposed by the *Ethics Commission* about the cases of infringements on the provisions of the *Code of ethics and rules of professional conduct*;
- endorses the proposals of the *Accreditation Department* regarding inclusion of new evaluator experts into the RNE;
- upon the request of the president, reviews the requests received from the Ministry of Education, other institutions and bodies, or natural persons, and decides on the manner of solving them, according to the proposals of the technical staff.

(2) In carrying out its duties, the ARACIS Executive Board issues decisions signed by the President or the Vice-President if the president is not present.

ARACIS ACCREDITATION AND EXTERNAL QUALITY EVALUATION DEPARTMENTS

Art. 18. (1) The *Accreditation and External Quality Evaluation departments* are composed of members of the ARACIS *Council*, and each department has 9 members.

(2) The department directors are appointed by the ARACIS President.

(3) The departments meet monthly in an ordinary meeting, and whenever necessary in extraordinary meetings, convened by the director.

(4) The meetings take place in the presence of at least two thirds of the total number of members, and are chaired by the director.



(5) As a rule, the meetings of the departments are attended in person by the Council members; however, they may also be held online, provided that the requirement in para. (4) or art. 18 is complied with.

(6) The discussions and the adopted decisions are recorded in the meeting minute.

Art. 19. The main duties of the *External Quality Evaluation Department* and the *Accreditation Department* are:

- coordinate the development of and submit to the *ARACIS Council's Executive Board's* approval the methodology and standards for the external evaluation and the accreditation and the reference standards and the list of performance indicators for higher education institutions and other education providers, for the various types of study programmes/domains, and periodically proceed to analysing and reviewing these;
- propose the schedule of evaluation and/or accreditation missions and the membership of the experts' panels for each evaluation mission to the approval of the *ARACIS Council*, using the RNE of ARACIS for this;
- draft the accreditation reports and the external quality evaluation reports, based on the reports produced by the Permanent Speciality Experts' Commissions and the expert evaluator panels, respectively;
- develop and submit to the *ARACIS Council's Executive Board's* approval the training methodologies for the training of the experts who will conduct the evaluation missions;
- with the support of the ARACIS technical staff, drafts the internal reports of ARACIS for the validation of the results of the evaluation missions;
- coordinate the drafting of manuals and guides, based on the best practices in the field, and propose them to the *ARACIS Council* for publication;
- coordinate the development of studies, analyses, and synthesis papers on quality assurance in higher education, and propose them to the *ARACIS Council* for publication;
- carry out the decisions of the *ARACIS Council* in their own field of competence.

CHAPTER V Duties of the members of the Executive Board

THE PRESIDENT

Art. 20. (1) *The President of ARACIS* provides the management for the Agency, and represents ARACIS in the relationships with public authorities and institutions, domestic and foreign natural persons and legal entities, as well as in court.

(2) The President carries out the following main duties, according to the law:

- carries out the duties that ARACIS has as a legal entity;
- performs the function of credit authoriser, as provided by the law;
- approves the ARACIS's list of positions;
- appoints and discharges the technical staff of ARACIS, as provided by the law;
- draws up the draft institutional strategy of ARACIS related to fulfilling its mission, and forwards it to the *ARACIS Council* for review and approval;
- establishes the methodological principles for drawing up the accreditation standards, the national reference standards, and the performance indicators for evaluation and quality assurance in higher education;
- coordinates the drawing up of an annual activity report of ARACIS, which is forwarded to the *ARACIS Council* to be adopted;
- concludes service contracts with domestic and foreign institutions and with the Ministry of Education, for the external quality evaluation of higher education programmes and



higher education programme providers;

- establishes the principles for the drafting of various publications of ARACIS related to internal and external quality evaluation and assurance in higher education;
- reviews the requests received from the Ministry of Education, other institutions and bodies, or natural persons, and decides on the manner of solving them, according to the proposals of the technical staff, as applicable, subject to consulting the Executive Board.

(3) The President may delegate to the Vice-President or the General Director his/her duties as a credit authoriser and legal representative.

(4) In carrying out his/her duties, the President also carries out other duties arising from legal provisions.

(5) In carrying out his/her duties, the President issues *decisions* and signs the *decisions* of the ARACIS Council and the *decisions* of the Executive Board.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Art. 21. (1) The Vice-President of ARACIS collaborates with the President in carrying out all his/her duties.

(2) When the President is not present, the Vice-President carries out all the President's duties.

(3) The Vice-President of ARACIS also carries out the following duties, in compliance with the law:

- proposes the list of positions for the technical staff of ARACIS, and forwards it to the President for approval;
- coordinates the development of studies, research, periodic system analyses on the quality of higher education in Romania, which he/she publishes after they are adopted by the ARACIS Council;
- is in charge with ARACIS's communication with other domestic and foreign institutions and organisations;
- together with his/her counterpart at the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University Education, organises bi-annual ARACIS - ARACIP consultations;
- carries out other duties assigned by the President, the *Executive Board* or the *ARACIS Council*, subject to the law.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Art. 22. The ARACIS Secretary General is a member of the *ARACIS Council* and of the *Executive Board*, and has the following main duties:

- prepares the meetings of the *ARACIS Council* and *Executive Board*, supported by the General Director;
- endorses the professional evaluations for the technical staff of ARACIS;
- together with the General Director, monitors how the resolutions recorded in the minutes of the *Executive Board* and the *ARACIS Council* are carried out, as well as the carrying out, by the Legal Compartment, of the draft *Executive Board Decisions* and *Council Decisions*;
- together with the General Director and the director of the profile department, coordinates and monitors the implementation of the correspondence flow based on the operational procedures of ARACIS;
- together with the department directors, the General Director, and the directors of the speciality directions of the technical staff, coordinates the organisation and keeping of the ARACIS archive;
- periodically, together with the department directors and the General Director, organises



consultations with higher education institutions in order to establish the priorities of quality assurance;

- checks that the *Decisions* of the ARACIS Council and the results of the external evaluation missions are published on the ARACIS website after their approval by the ARACIS Council;
- together with the department directors, the General Director, and the directors of the speciality directions of the technical staff, monitors the updating of the ARACIS procedures according to the developments in the law, and submits them to the ARACIS Council for approval;
- carries out other duties assigned by the President, the *Executive Board*, or the ARACIS Council, subject to the law.

DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS

Art. 23. The *director of the External Quality Evaluation Department* and the *director of the Accreditation Department* have the following main duties:

- coordinates and participate in the development and the periodic reviewing of the standards, national reference standards and performance indicators for higher education quality evaluation and assurance, based on best practices;
- coordinates the development of manuals, best practice guides, research and studies related to the department's field of competence;
- with the support of the technical staff, is in charge with organising and managing the database regarding the activity of ARACIS;
- makes, manages, and periodically updates the RNE of ARACIS, with the support of the technical staff;
- develops the criteria for the selection of expert evaluators and the criteria for appointing the members of the Permanent Speciality Experts' Commissions;
- proposes the procedure for the organisation of the Permanent Speciality Experts' Commission to the ARACIS Council;
- together with the Secretary General and the General Director, monitors the updating of the ARACIS procedures according to the developments in the law, and submits them to the ARACIS Council for approval;
- carries out other duties assigned by the President, the *Executive Board* or the ARACIS Council, according to the law.

CHAPTER VI Permanent working structures

PERMANENT SPECIALITY EXPERTS' COMMISSIONS

Art. 24. (1) *The Permanent Speciality Experts' Commissions* cover all the speciality domains and forms of education in which study programmes are being developed in higher education institutions in Romania, as follows:

- Exact sciences and natural sciences
- Humanist sciences and theology
- Legal sciences
- Social, political and communication sciences
- Administrative sciences, education sciences and psychology
- Economic sciences (I)
- Economic sciences (II)
- Arts, architecture, town planning, physical education and sport



- Agricultural and forest sciences and veterinary medicine
- Engineering sciences (I)
- Engineering sciences (II)
- Medical sciences
- Distance and part-time learning

(2) The commissions are composed of expert evaluators selected according to a specific procedure and approved by the ARACIS *Council*. Besides these members, every permanent commission includes a student, appointed by the national student federations, and employers' representatives, at least for the engineering sciences commissions, selected through specific procedures.

(3) The structure, internal operation, duties, and manner of adopting decisions within the permanent experts' commissions of ARACIS are stipulated in the *Regulation on the operation of the Permanent Speciality Experts' Commissions of ARACIS*.

THE COMMISSION OF INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION FOR MANAGERIAL AND FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

Art. 25. (1) The members of the *Commission of Institutional Evaluation for Managerial and Financial Activities* are expert evaluators in the field of managerial and financial activities and institutional structure evaluators, and participate in external institutional evaluations.

(2) The ARACIS Council appoints the members of the Commission of Institutional Evaluation for Managerial and Financial Activities by selection from the experts in the RNE.

THE CONSULTATIVE COMMISSION

Art. 26. (1) *The Consultative Commission* represents the interests of the higher education institutions and contributes to an efficient collaboration with these institutions for the development and implementation of adequate evaluation and quality assurance activities in line with the education quality needs of universities.

(2) The members of the Consultative Commission assist the institutional evaluation panels in their activities in order to provide an objective, transparent opinion on the processes being carried out, and are included in the appeal commissions dealing with the appeals filed by higher education institutions.

(3) The members of the *Consultative Commission* are appointed by the ARACIS Council and selected from the proposals of the National Rectors' Council (CNR); they are important members of the Romanian academic community and, as a rule, have a significant activity in quality assurance.

THE DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION

Art. 27. (1) *The Disciplinary Commission* is a deliberative structure with no legal personality, which carries out its duties independently and has competence in analysing the actions of persons/employees, which have been reported as disciplinary offenses.

(2) The Commission is composed of 3 (three) members who are members of the technical staff of ARACIS, appointed over a three-year period by Decision of the ARACIS Council.

(3) The *Disciplinary Commission* operates based on a system procedure *Disciplinary investigation procedure*, made for internal use.

THE ETHICS COMMISSION

Art. 28. (1) To ensure compliance with the *Code of ethics and rules of professional conduct*, the *Ethics Commission* is established and operates alongside the ARACIS Council.

(2) The Commission has the following duties:

- monitor the systematic use of the provisions of the *Code*;
- receive, investigate, and solve the cases of offense against the ethical principles and rules



of conduct, and the cases of incompatibility and conflict of interests;

- propose resolutions on solving the reports on and the investigations initiated by the Commission regarding infringements on the provisions of the *Code*;
- draft annual reports on the ethical conduct of the members of ARACIS.

(3) The Ethics Commission is composed of five persons of moral authority, appointed over a four-year period; the Commission operates according to the *Code of ethics and rules of conduct in the activities performed by ARACIS for quality assurance in higher education in Romania*.

THE MONITORING COMMISSION

Art. 29. (1) *The Monitoring Commission's* role is to monitor, coordinate and provide methodological guidance for the implementation and development of the internal management control system at ARACIS.

(2) The Commission includes the heads of the compartments included in the first tier of management in the Agency's organisational structure, and operates according to the Regulation on the organisation and operation of the *Monitoring Commission for the implementation and development of the internal management control system at ARACIS*.

CHAPTER VII Structure and duties of the technical staff

Art. 30. TECHNICAL STAFF CARRYING OUT MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS

(1) The General Director, the speciality directors, the heads of service and the heads of office in the organisational structure of ARACIS organise, coordinate, guide, and are responsible for the activity of the structures they are managing, and ensure the proper collaboration with other structures of the organisation;

(2) The heads of the organisational structures of ARACIS:

- organise the activity of the departments they are managing through a balanced distribution of tasks;
- assign tasks to their subordinated staff, directly or through directors, heads of service or heads of office, as applicable; establish how such tasks are to be solved, what their priority is and, as applicable, the deadline of such tasks;
- check and endorse or, as applicable, approve the works prepared within the department they are coordinating;
- formulate proposals on providing the human, material, and financial resources required for the operation of the organisational structures they are managing;
- are responsible with the implementation, and with reporting on the progress regarding the internal management control standards.

(3) When absent, the General Director, directors, heads of service, heads of office of the Agency's organisational structures delegate their duties to their subordinates holding management or executive positions in the structure they coordinate, with the endorsement of their hierarchic superior.

THE GENERAL DIRECTOR

Art. 31. (1) The Technical Staff of ARACIS is led by a General Director.

(2) The **General Director** has the following main duties:

- collaborates with the Secretary General in organising all the activities performed at ARACIS for the purpose of implementing the *Decisions* of the ARACIS *Council* and the *Decisions* of the President and of the *Executive Board*;
- ensures permanent contact between the ARACIS management structures and the four



- speciality directions;
- supports the President and the Vice-President of the ARACIS *Council* in carrying out their duties;
 - may represent ARACIS in the relationships with the public authorities and institutions, domestic and foreign natural persons, and legal entities, according to the mandate received from the ARACIS President;
 - with the approval of the ARACIS President, and invited by institutions or bodies, participates in various national and international higher education quality assurance activities: projects, conferences, workshops, training sessions etc.
 - attends the meetings of the ARACIS *Executive Board* and the ARACIS *Council* as a permanent guest;
 - organises weekly working meetings with the directors of the speciality directions;
 - monitors the performance of the tasks of every speciality direction;
 - together with the directors of the speciality directions, conducts periodic analyses of the operations in those directions;
 - by no later than February next year, drafts a *status report* that will be presented to the President for the drafting of the *annual report*.
 - performs other tasks established by the *Executive Board* and the ARACIS *Council*.

THE QUALITY ASSURANCE DIRECTION

Art. 32. (1) The Quality Assurance Direction is led by a director and composed of two services, one office, and one compartment: *the Programme Accreditation and Evaluation Service; the Institutional Accreditation and Evaluation Service*, including the *Office for Evaluation of Doctoral Studies*, and the *Postgraduate Study Programme Accreditation Compartment*.

(2) The **director** has the following main duties:

- organises, coordinates, and manages the activity of the Quality Assurance Direction;
- coordinates and organises the evaluation and quality assurance activities carried out at ARACIS, and the activities that entail revising or developing specific guides and procedures;
- ensures publication on the ARACIS website of the decisions of the ARACIS *Council* and the results of the external evaluation missions, after their approval by the ARACIS *Council*;
- participates in developing studies and analyses concerning evaluation and quality assurance;
- coordinates the drafting of the answers to the queries submitted to ARACIS, related to its field of activity;
- collaborates with the other directions of the institution in carrying out his/her duties.
- performs other tasks established by the *Executive Board* and the ARACIS *Council*.

(3) The duties of the **Programme Accreditation and Evaluation Service** are:

- contributes to developing and revising the *Guide on conducting quality evaluation activities of higher education study programmes and higher education institutions*;
- ensures that the necessary documents are drafted correctly in the evaluation processes, in line with the *Methodology for external evaluation, standards, standards of reference and the list of performance indicators of ARACIS*, Order no. 3.200/2020 on approving the Methodology for evaluation of doctoral studies and the systems of criteria, standards, and performance indicators used in the evaluation, and the *Guide on conducting quality evaluation activities of higher education study programmes and higher education institutions*;
- supports the activity of the Permanent Speciality Experts' Commissions and expert



evaluators of the ARACIS Register of Evaluators;

- fills in the database with the activity of the *Permanent Speciality Experts' Commissions*;
- checks and endorses the evaluation requests of higher education institutions;
- checks and signs the reception-acceptance note for the self-evaluation files received from institutions;
- checks that all required documents have been submitted and enters the self-evaluation reports into the ARACIS database, and also processes all the information arising from this activity;
- participates in external institutional evaluations (accreditation/quality assurance) as a technical secretary and ensures that the specific methodology and guides are implemented;
- drafts the ARACIS *Council* Reports related to its own field of activity, and sees to their publication on the ARACIS website and in the DEQAR database;
- participates in making analyses, drafting technical reports at the level of the *Executive Board* and the ARACIS *Council*, and in providing data for the Annual Report of ARACIS;
- participates in the implementation of the programmes or projects implemented by ARACIS;
- drafts answers to the requests of various institutions or natural persons regarding the external quality evaluation of bachelor study programmes, higher education study programmes, master's and doctoral domains and for the external institutional evaluations;
- with the approval of the *Executive Board* of the ARACIS *Council*, and invited by institutions or bodies, participates in various national and international higher education quality assurance activities: projects, conferences, workshops, training sessions etc.

(4) The duties of the ***Institutional Accreditation and Evaluation Service*** are:

- contributes in developing and revising the guides for the external evaluation for institutional authorising/accreditation and the external evaluation of the academic quality in the accredited higher education institutions;
- sees to the correctness of the documents related to external quality evaluation for institutional evaluations;
- fills in the database with the activity of the Permanent Speciality Experts' Commissions;
- proposes a technical secretary for organising and carrying out the activities during institutional evaluations;
- checks and signs the reception-acceptance note for the evaluation files received from institutions;
- checks that all required documents have been submitted and enters the self-evaluation reports into the ARACIS database, and also processes all the information arising from this activity;
- drafts the ARACIS *Council* Reports related to its own field of activity;
- supports the activity of the Permanent Speciality Experts' Commissions and expert evaluators of the ARACIS Register of Evaluators;
- participates in making analyses, drafting technical reports at the level of the *Executive Board* and the ARACIS *Council*, and in providing data for the Annual Report of ARACIS;
- participates in the implementation of the programmes or projects implemented by ARACIS;
- drafts answers to the inquiries of various institutions or natural persons concerning the external quality evaluation in higher education institutions;



- with the approval of the Executive Board of the ARACIS Council, and invited by institutions or bodies, participates in various national and international higher education quality assurance activities: projects, conferences, workshops, training sessions etc.
- (5) The duties of the ***Office for Evaluation of Doctoral Studies*** are:
- ensures that the necessary documents are drafted correctly in the evaluation processes, in line with the *Methodology for external evaluation, standards, standards of reference and the list of performance indicators of ARACIS*, Order no. 3.200/2020 on approving the Methodology for evaluation of doctoral studies and the systems of criteria, standards, and performance indicators used in the evaluation, and the *Guide on conducting quality evaluation activities of higher education study programmes and higher education institutions*;
 - supports the activity of the Permanent Speciality Experts' Commissions and expert evaluators of the ARACIS Register of Evaluators;
 - fills in the database with the activity of the Permanent Speciality Experts' Commissions;
 - when requested by the Executive Board of ARACIS, checks the doctoral study evaluation requests filed by higher education institutions;
 - checks and signs the reception-acceptance note for the internal evaluation files received from higher education institutions;
 - checks that all required documents have been submitted and enters the internal evaluation reports into the ARACIS database, and also processes all the information arising from this activity;
 - drafts the ARACIS *Council* Reports related to its own field of activity, and sees to their publication on the ARACIS website;
 - drafts answers to the inquiries of various institutions or natural persons concerning the external quality evaluation of doctoral studies;
 - with the approval of the Executive Board of the ARACIS *Council*, and invited by institutions or bodies, participates in various national and international higher education quality assurance activities: projects, conferences, workshops, training sessions etc.
- (6) The duties of the ***Postgraduate Study Programme Accreditation Compartment*** are:
- contributes to developing and revising the *Guides for quality evaluation activities of post-secondary study programmes*;
 - sees to the correctness of the documents related to external quality evaluation for post-secondary study programmes;
 - fills in the database with the activity of the Permanent Speciality Experts' Commissions;
 - checks and endorses the evaluation requests of higher education institutions;
 - checks and signs the reception-acceptance note for the self-evaluation files received from institutions;
 - checks that all required documents have been submitted, and enters the self-evaluation reports into the ARACIS database and also processes all the information arising from this activity;
 - drafts the ARACIS *Council* Reports related to its own field of activity;
 - supports the activity of the Permanent Speciality Experts' Commissions and expert evaluators of the ARACIS Register of Evaluators;
 - participates in making analyses, drafting technical reports at the level of the *Executive Board* and the ARACIS *Council*, and in providing data for the Annual Report of ARACIS;
 - participates in the implementation of the programmes or projects implemented by ARACIS;
 - drafts answers to the inquiries of various institutions or natural persons concerning the



external quality evaluation of post-secondary study programmes;

- with the approval of the Executive Board of the ARACIS Council, and invited by institutions or bodies, participates in various national and international higher education quality assurance activities: projects, conferences, workshops, training sessions etc.

THE ECONOMIC DIRECTION

Art. 33. (1) *The Economic Direction* is led by a director who coordinates the Financial-Accounting Service and the Administrative Office.

(2) *The director of the Economic Direction* has the following duties:

- organises, coordinates, and manages the activity of the Economic Direction;
- binds the institution in patrimonial matters, together with the credit authoriser;
- is responsible for drawing up the periodic financial statements and the balance sheet report, signing them and presenting them to the credit authoriser for signing;
- checks and provides the first signature on the treasury payment and cashing documents;
- is responsible with drawing up, signing and presenting the Income and Expenditure Budget to the ARACIS Council;
- draws up the report for the annual inventorying operation and shows how the inventorying shall be conducted, as well as the start and end date of the operation;
- performs other tasks established by the *Executive Board* and the *ARACIS Council*;
- collaborates with the other directions of the institution in carrying out his/her duties.

(3) The *Financial-Accounting Service* is composed of the *Accounting Office*, and has the following duties:

- organises and coordinates the financial-accounting activities;
- organises and performs the preventive financial control;
- draws up the payrolls and the money orders, and records them in the accounting entries;
- periodically and permanently draws up and submits the reports requested by the speciality bodies, using the FOREXBUG application;
- organises, coordinates and makes the cash payments and records them in the accounting entries;
- records the drafting of the documents for expense commitment, liquidation, authorisation and payment at ARACIS;
- organises and fills in data in the accounting registers;
- checks the documents related to travels, calculations of the due amounts, payments and recording in the accounting entries;
- organises and ensures the accounting of materials, inventory assets, and non-current assets;
- organises and ensures the accounting of revenues, expenses and results;
- ensures the accounting of claims and debts;
- monthly draws up the trial balance.

(3) The *Administrative Office* has the following duties:

- organises, coordinates and manages the administrative activity of ARACIS;
- draws up request notes for the procurement of cleaning and maintenance materials;
- sees to the provision of cleaning activities in the ARACIS venues;
- receives, keeps operative records of incoming and outgoing materials, inventory assets, and non-current assets;
- ensures the protocol activities at ARACIS;
- issues the vehicle logbooks for the vehicles of ARACIS and checks fuel consumption;
- monthly monitors expenses with utilities, checks and certifies invoices received per compartments for payment;



- keeps operative records of the ARACIS assets, by drawing up the warehouse notes and the register of inventory assets;
- ensures and performs the receiving, keeping, and releasing of goods, as provided by the law;
- participates in conducting patrimony inventorying and asset scrapping operations;
- ensures the occupational health and safety operations and the fire safety operations at ARACIS.

THE ORGANISATION, IT, HUMAN RESOURCES AND PUBLIC PROCUREMENT DIRECTION

Art. 34. (1) The Direction is managed by a director who coordinates the *Evaluation Document Management, Registry and Archive Service, the IT Compartment, the Human Resources Compartment and the Public Procurement Compartment*.

(2) The director of the *Organisation, IT, Human Resources and Public Procurement Direction* has the following general duties:

- organises, coordinates and leads the activity of the *Organisation, IT, Human Resources and Public Procurement Direction*;
- coordinates the activity of the *Public Procurement Compartment* by endorsing the annual public procurement plan and endorsing the substantiation notes and the public procurement contracts;
- checks the performance of the public procurement contracts and their archiving according to the law;
- coordinates and organises the activities related to the performance of the contracts concluded for the provisional authorising, accreditation, and periodic evaluation of higher education and post-secondary study programmes, the activity related to access to information of public interest at the level of the Agency;
- monitors the status of the ongoing contracts, through the *Evaluation Document Management, Registry and Archive Service* speciality experts/inspectors;
- endorses the archiving process of the Agency's documents;
- coordinates the activity of the IT Compartment;
- until an expert is employed in the *Human Resources Compartment*, he/she carries out the activity of this compartment;
- draws up the job descriptions and proposes the scores in the annual professional evaluation of the employees of the direction;
- performs other tasks established by the *Executive Board* and the *ARACIS Council*;
- collaborates with the other directions of the institution in carrying out his/her duties.

(3) The *Evaluation Document Management, Registry and Archive Service* has the following duties:

- exchanges correspondence with education providers about the initiation of the evaluation process and the performance of the concluded contracts, per types of evaluations;
- manages the documents issued with respect to the conclusion and performance of the contracts (requests from the institutions, contracts, fiscal invoices, reception-acceptance notes);
- drafts the reception-acceptance notes to enable inclusion of the files submitted by education providers in the ARACIS database;
- monitors and checks the progress on drafting the documents related to payment of the evaluation fee, in line with the laws in force and the regulations of ARACIS (fiscal invoices);
- checks the payment and collection of the evaluation fees paid by the education providers



- according to the service contracts concluded with them and the issued fiscal invoices;
- monthly draws up a report on the revenues collected for the evaluation and quality assurance procedures completed in ARACIS Council meetings, within 5 working days;
 - draws up records of the internal evaluation reports received by ARACIS, per types of evaluations (based on the existing reception-acceptance notes);
 - draws up the necessary documents for returning the amounts mistakenly paid by universities and included in the ARACIS accounting and operative records;
 - carries out the archiving of all the documents generated in the evaluation and quality assurance processes;
 - drafts and sends the *Economic Direction* a report on the ongoing contracts to enable inventorying the works that have not been completed from the previous year, per types of evaluations;
 - drafts a monthly report on ongoing contracts to be monitored based on the duration of the concluded contract;
 - within the limits of its duties, formulates proposals on fixing some problems that may occur in the organisation and flow of the documents between speciality compartments;
 - receives, records and distributes the mail to the ARACIS directions/services and offices, as applicable;
 - monitors that the internal mailing be solved within the legal time limit and archives a hard-copy and an electronic copy of the answer sent;
 - performs document registration and archiving activities in the institution;
 - receives the mail intended for sending using the Romanian Postal Services from the directions/services and offices of ARACIS and sends it to the post office;
 - ensures courier activities for all the documents of the directions/services and offices at ARACIS.

(4) The *IT Compartment* has the following duties:

- ensures proper operation of the institution's internal IT network;
- provides specialised technical support for the ARACIS staff;
- manages the online evaluator training and academic evaluation platforms;
- manages (creates/revokes) the digital certificates for the authorised users of the online academic evaluation platform;
- provides technical support to the users of the online platforms;
- ensures maintenance and updating for the Agency's website;
- manages and performs the maintenance of the virtual workstations;
- installs the IT equipment required for the activities of the Agency's staff;
- prepares the technical aspects in the meeting room for the meetings and provides technical support, including with the voting system;
- manages the online activities of ARACIS, including the voting system;
- provides technical support in IT equipment procurements;
- depending on the requests of the management and the technical equipment available, proposes solutions for the development of IT services;
- updates software applications (updating of the salaries application, money orders application, Legis, Revisal etc.);
- installs electronic signatures;
- manages authentication coordinates (passwords) for all the IT systems of ARACIS: IT system, web platforms, e-mail server, etc.;
- manages the pfe.aracis.ro platform and drafts reports regarding the candidates that require access to the pfe.aracis.ro platform and who will become ARACIS evaluators;
- manages and updates the *National Register of Evaluators*, and the composition



of the Permanent (speciality) Experts' Commissions;

- manages the Internal Market Information System (IMI);
- manages and provides technical support for the ARACIS document platform (cloud);
- collaborates with the person mandated by ARACIS in carrying out the tasks related to personal data protection.

(5) The ***Human Resources Compartment*** has the following duties:

- conducts analyses regarding the number of staff at ARACIS and the organisational structure;
- checks and submits the ARACIS list of positions for approval, and includes the changes in its structure; draws up the monthly staff list/list of positions at ARACIS and checks compliance with the budget approved for staff expenses;
- is in charge with recruitment (contest documentations, contest participation files, organising the contests, etc.);
- participates in drafting the *Regulation on the Organisation and Operation* and the *Internal Regulation* of ARACIS;
- monitors the drawing up of the job description for the ARACIS personnel and to this purpose collaborates with all ARACIS services and monitors job description updates;
- draws up the employment decisions, promotion decisions, appointment decisions, minutes, notes, reports etc. for which the Human Resources compartment is responsible;
- draws up the employment contracts of the ARACIS employees;
- draws up the documentation requested by employees for retirement;
- draws up the professional file of contract staff;
- ensures archiving in the professional/personal files of the employees and archiving of all documents related to staff records;
- when requested by employees, issues certificates to certify the employees' length in service/position;
- endorses the documents needed for calculation of base salaries and for establishing the rights related to annual leaves, maternity leaves and other social rights;
- checks the proposals regarding promotions to a higher professional rank/class for the contractual personnel and carries out the operations related to the promotion, in compliance with the legal provisions;
- coordinates and monitors the professional evaluation process for the employees and monitors that the evaluation procedures are applied correctly;
- plans the staff's participation in training programmes;
- fills in and sends the REVISAL to the Territorial Labour Inspection office with all required information according to the law;
- sends the documents requested by the president of the *Discipline Commission*, in line with the system procedure;
- carries out the activities related to implementing the legal provisions concerning the declarations of wealth and the declarations of interests, according to Law no. 167/2010 regarding integrity in performing public function and office, as further amended and supplemented;

(5) The ***Public Procurement Compartment*** has the following duties:

- performs the necessary actions to register/renew/recover registration of the contracting entity with the electronic public procurement system or recover the digital certificate, if necessary;
- draws up and, as applicable, updates the annual public procurement schedule and, if applicable, the annual procurement strategy, based on the demand reported by other compartments of the contracting authority;



- draws up or, as applicable, coordinates the drawing up of the tender documentation and the contracting strategy, the contest documentation and the contracting documentation in case of a solution contest, based on the demand reported by the speciality compartments;
- meets the obligations regarding advertising, as provided in Law 98/2016 on public procurement;
- applies and completes the awarding procedures;
- makes direct procurements;
- creates and keeps the public procurement files.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, PROJECTS, COOPERATION AND RESEARCH DIRECTION

Art. 35. (1) *The International Relations, Projects, Cooperation and Research Direction* is managed by a director who coordinates the *International Relations, Project Implementation, Communication and Events Organising Service*, the *Socio-economic Relations Compartment* and the *Research Office*.

(2) *The director of the International Relations, Projects, Cooperation and Research Direction* has the following general duties:

- organises, coordinates and manages the activity of the *International Relations, Projects, Cooperation and Research Direction*;
- proposes the ARACIS international relations strategy and monitors its implementation as per the *Council's* approval;
- participates in the international activities performed by ARACIS, according to the approval of the *Executive Board/the Council*, including as a representative of the Agency;
- assists the management of ARACIS in drawing up the official position of the Agency, requested by the business and social environment, international organisations and partners, etc.;
- coordinates the events organising activity;
- coordinates the public communication activities related to the activities of ARACIS, according to the decisions of the Executive Board or the Council;
- coordinates cooperation and communication with the business and social environment and all stakeholders;
- implements the measures for which the *International Relations, Projects, Cooperation and Research Direction* is in charge, established by the Agency's *Council*, in the activity of the internal and international projects where ARACIS is a beneficiary or a partner, and represents ARACIS in other similar projects;
- coordinates publication of the Agency's journal and the activities related to drafting reports and studies.

(3) *The International Relations, Project Implementation, Communication and Events Organising Service* has the following duties:

- performs the activities related to international cooperation - communication with the organisations that ARACIS is a member of: European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), Central and Eastern European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA), International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), European Network for Accreditation of Engineering Education (ENAAEE);



- coordinates the drafting of the documentation related to the external review of ARACIS by ENQA (once every five years) and coordinates the drafting of the Interim Progress/Follow-up Reports;
- coordinates the submission of the EQAR registration renewal application (once every five years), and the drafting of the Substantive Changes Reports periodically submitted to EQAR;
- participates in preparing the documents and organising the ENAEE evaluation visit at ARACIS for awarding of EUR-ACE label;
- monitors implementation of best practices of other European higher education quality assurance agencies;
- takes the necessary steps to organise the international travels of ARACIS representatives;
- participates in Agency representation missions in the country and abroad, according to the *Executive Board* decisions;
- organises training sessions for ARACIS expert evaluators;
- organises visits of domestic/foreign partners at ARACIS within projects or in bilateral cooperation relations;
- carries out the communication with student organisations in Romania for support in organising training sessions for student evaluators;
- draws up points of view for communication with/drafting of answers to the requests of higher education institutions, the Ministry of Education or other institutions operating in higher education quality assurance, in line with the specific duties of the Direction;
- solves requests/communications after obtaining the legal endorsement and the points of view drafted by the speciality compartments;
- applies the provisions of Law no. 544/2001 regarding access to information of public interest, and monitors compliance with information communication deadlines;
- ensures the annual drafting of the Report related to Law no. 544/2001 regarding free access to information of public interest, and facilitates access to information of public interest by supporting the updating of the data posted on the institution's website by each speciality compartment;
- ensures publication on the institution's website of the Annual Report related to Law no. 544/2001 regarding free access to information of public interest;
- based on written or verbal requests, ensures access of citizens to information of public interest;
- takes initiative in communicating the information of public interest specified in Law no. 544/2001 and ARACIS Council Decision no. 67/2020;
- provides a written answer to requests of information of public interest, within the time limits stipulated in Law 544/2001 on free access to information of public interest, as further amended and supplemented;
- carries out monitoring of mass media (written press, radio, tv and internet), educational think tanks and opinion leaders within the scope of the Agency's interest, especially monitoring any reference to the Agency and to higher education, respectively quality assurance and sends such monitoring to the ARACIS Council and the technical staff;
- is involved in conceiving, drafting and issuing press releases regarding the activities of ARACIS, as ordered by the management;
- ensures dissemination of the relevant information of interest for the general public, through specific mass media communication instruments (e.g. press releases, informative



materials/newsletter, answers to press inquiries, points of view of the institution, visibility on social media etc.);

- participates in developing and publishing other presentation materials (papers, brochures, newsletter, ARACIS social media presence etc.) regarding the activities of ARACIS;
- contributes to developing the structure and content of the ARACIS website and publishes relevant information regarding the institution's activity on the ARACIS website;
- participates in creating documents or contracting services for the translation of the documents required for the Agency's international visibility and for cooperation with international organisations and partners;
- monitors calls for project proposals and informs the ARACIS management about the existing funding opportunities;
- participates in developing project proposals and implementing projects in which ARACIS is a beneficiary or a partner, as applicable.

(4) The ***Socio-economic Relations Compartment*** has the following duties:

- supports the *Programme Accreditation and Evaluation Service* and the *Institutional Accreditation and Evaluation Service* in their relationship with the employers' representatives registered in the Employers' Register related to organising periodic training activities;
- ensures the communication and collaboration interface between ARACIS and social-economic partners;
- develops partnerships with the social-economic environment in connection with external quality assurance.

(5) The ***Research Office*** has the following duties:

- carries out research related to education quality assurance;
- ensures bi-annual publication of the Quality Assurance Review for Higher Education (QAR) journal;
- coordinates the drafting of the annual activity reports of ARACIS;
- participates in the periodic (every 3 years) drafting of system analyses on the quality of higher education in Romania;
- participates in the periodic drafting of manuals, guides, best practice summaries in the field of quality evaluation and assurance.

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Art. 36. (1) The *President's Cabinet Office* is directly subordinated to the ARACIS President and is led by a head of cabinet with three advisors and one secretary subordinated to him/her (working under an individual employment contract).

(2) The ***head of cabinet*** has the following main duties:

- organises and coordinates the activity of the President's Cabinet Office;
- provides the President's operative interface with any of the functional compartments of the Agency;
- ensures advising of the President on specific issues;
- works to establish and prepare the President's agenda, including by developing the materials required for meetings;
- manages the President's official correspondence, including by drafting points of view, notes or answers;
- manages recording of the decisions signed by the President;
- together with the head of the Research Office, coordinates studies, syntheses, reports, points of view on various topics of interest;



- carries out any other duties for which it was mandated by the President, within the limits of the law.

(3) The *President's Cabinet Office* has the following duties:

- conducts or participates in conducting studies, evaluations, reports, drawing up draft normative documents or synthesis papers regarding the specific activities of ARACIS, including in working groups organised at the level of the Parliament, the Government or other ministries, public institutions or authorities;
- participates in developing or revising methodologies, guides or procedures;
- examines and proposes solutions to issues arising from the Agency's activity;
- informs on possibilities for solving some matters raised by representatives of any institutions / other persons received on appointments at the Agency;
- collaborates with ARACIS personnel in solving current matters;
- collaborates with any public or non-government institution, within the limits of the competences established by the President or the *Executive Board/Council*;
- takes phone calls, takes and records e-mail messages sent to secretariat@aracis.ro;
- records and submits the correspondence received at the cabinet and proposes resolutions or formulates answers, in collaboration with the technical staff;
- archives hard-copies and electronic copies of the correspondence with natural persons or institutions;
- archives hard-copies and electronic copies of the decisions signed by the President;
- collaborates with the Secretary General and the technical staff in carrying out the decisions made at the level of ARACIS and in solving the requests received, within the proper time limits;
- assists the President in the meetings with the representatives of the ministry or of other public institutions, when requested by the President and carries out the required tasks during such meetings;
- participates in developing the draft institutional strategy of ARACIS and the working plans;
- with the approval of the *Executive Board* of the *ARACIS Council*, and invited by institutions or bodies, participates in various national and international higher education quality assurance activities: projects, conferences, workshops, training sessions etc.;
- participates in developing and implementing training programmes for the experts;
- carries out any other tasks assigned by the ARACIS President.

PUBLIC INTERNAL AUDIT COMPARTMENT

Art. 37. (1) *The Public Internal Audit Compartment* is subordinated to the ARACIS President and has the following tasks:

- develops/updates the methodological norms for the carrying out of the public internal audit activity specific to ARACIS, endorsed by the Central Harmonization Unit for Public Internal Audit (CHUPIA);
- develops/updates the ARACIS Internal Audit Charter, which it submits to the Agency's management and to CHUPIA for endorsement;
- checks compliance with the norms, instructions, and the Code of ethics for internal auditors;
- develops the annual and multi-annual public internal audit plan;
- develops and implements the Quality assurance and improvement plan regarding all aspects of the public internal audit activity;



- carries out planned and/or ad hoc public internal audit activities to evaluate whether the financial management and internal control systems of ARACIS are transparent and compliant with the norms regarding lawfulness, regularity, cost-effectiveness, efficiency and efficacy;
- informs the CHUPIA about the recommendations not undertaken by the manager of the audited public entity and about the consequences of not implementing such recommendations, by sending syntheses accompanied by the relevant documentation, within 10 days from the end of the quarter when the public internal audit mission was completed;
- after completion of every stage of the annual audit plan, reports to the ARACIS management and to CHUPIA, upon its requests, on the findings, conclusions and recommendations resulting from its audit activities;
- draws up the annual report on the public internal audit activity of ARACIS, presenting how the objectives of the public internal audit compartment have been carried out;
- reports to the ARACIS President on the irregularities or the potential significant damages identified while carrying out public internal audit missions, and the President has the obligation to order steps to be taken accordingly;
- ensures monitoring of the implementation of the recommendations provided by internal auditors in the public internal audit reports, based on the reports communicated by the audited structures;
- informs the Agency's President about the recommendations that have not been implemented;
- ensures the organising and carrying out of continuous professional training;
- draws up the risk register for the public internal audit compartment;
- draws up the operational procedures within the public internal audit compartment.

LEGAL AND INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE OFFICE

Art. 38. (1) *The Legal and Internal Quality Assurance Office* is subordinated to the ARACIS President and managed by a head of office.

(2) The Office has the following duties with respect to the *legal activity*:

- defends the rights and legitimate interests of ARACIS in court;
- draws up, endorses contracts/legal documents in which the institution is a party, and ensures compliance with the legal provisions;
- checks and endorses contracts, addenda drafted by other organisational structures of ARACIS in line with the applicable laws;
- provides legal assistance, upon the request of the organisational structures of ARACIS, in drafting individual administrative papers and documents;
- draws up and endorses the decisions of the *Executive Board* of the ARACIS Council and the decisions of the ARACIS Council;
- endorses the President's decisions;
- issues points of view and provides legal endorsements in the activity related to solving petitions, according to the provisions of Government Emergency Ordinance no. 27/2002 on regulating the petition solving activity, as further amended and supplemented, and the activity of solving requests pursuant to Law no. 544/2001 regarding free access to information of public interest;
- checks and endorses as legally valid the public procurement contracts in which the Agency is a contracting authority, as well as any other documents related to public procurements for which, according to the legal provisions in force, a legal validity endorsement is required;



- checks and endorses as legally valid the contracts, conventions, protocols, agreements, etc. in which the Agency is a party and for which a legal validity endorsement is required;
 - checks and endorses as legally valid the decisions on withholding or imputing amounts related to recovering the damages caused by employees/members of the ARACIS Council;
 - carries out activities related to monitoring the legislation in the field of higher education, and sends a weekly report on new legislation and a point of view on the implementation of such legislation to the *Executive Board* of the ARACIS Council;
 - proposes updating the information included in the legislation section on the Agency's website.
- (3) The office has the following duties with respect to the *internal quality assurance* activity:
- coordinates the drafting of internal procedures and the provision of logistic support for the updating and management of internal procedures;
 - manages the documents related to the quality management system;
 - makes the Internal quality assurance report;
 - draws up the programme for the development of the managerial internal control system at the Agency;
 - ensures the logistic support for organising and conducting the meetings of the Monitoring Commission;
 - sees to the proper development of the internal management control reporting documentation and of documents related to the internal management control.

CHAPTER VIII National Register of Expert Evaluators

Art. 39. (1) *The National Register of Expert Evaluators* includes: the National Register of Expert Evaluators (teaching staff); the National Register of Student Expert Evaluators; the Register of International Expert Evaluators; the Register of Employers.

(2) Expert evaluators of ARACIS can be tenured professors or professors who continue their teaching activity with the approval of the university senate, holding the degree of associate professor or university professor, with experience in education quality assurance.

(3) National or international expert evaluators, teaching staff or students are selected in a transparent manner, based on a procedure approved by the Council, with no discrimination (e.g. based on gender, ethnicity, political or religious affiliation etc.), through an electronic platform (in the case of national experts).

(4) The expert evaluators of ARACIS, selected as per art. 38, para. (2) constitute the *National Register of Expert Evaluators (teaching staff)* (RNE) and respectively the *Register of International Expert Evaluators*.

(5) The student federations draw up their own student register containing the students that they appoint for participation as expert higher education quality evaluators, thus constituting the *National Register of Student Expert Evaluators*.

(6) Employers' representatives, constituting the *ARACIS Register of Employers' Representatives*, may participate as members of the evaluation panels.

(7) Expert evaluators attend training sessions organised by ARACIS. In the case of student experts, training sessions are organised by student federations in partnership with ARACIS.



CHAPTER IX – Documents, contracts and decisions flow and registration at ARACIS

Art. 40. (1) The following documents regulating the institution’s activity are issued at ARACIS:

- a) Decisions of the ARACIS Council
- b) Decisions of the Executive Board of the ARACIS Council
- c) Decisions of the ARACIS President.

(2) The documents mentioned in para. (1) letters a) and b) of art. 39 are drafted in the Legal and Internal Quality Assurance Office, and the decisions at para. 1 letter c) are drafted in the speciality compartments (human resources, public procurement) and endorsed by the directors of those departments, as applicable. These are registered and archived by the President’s Cabinet (in hard copy and electronically), and one copy is kept by the Legal and Internal Quality Assurance Office and, as applicable, by the speciality compartments. The head of the Legal and Internal Quality Assurance Office endorses all the issued decisions, irrespective of their type.

(3) Registration numbers start at 1 every year and are assigned in ascending order irrespective of the type of decision. The numbers of the Council decisions include the letter H; the numbers of the Executive Board decisions include the letter B, and the numbers of the President’s decisions include the letter P. **Annex 3** of the Regulation on the Organisation and Operation of ARACIS includes the register template.

Art. 41. (1) The correspondence received at ARACIS by mail, e-mail or fax is registered in the Registry service and then forwarded to the President’s Cabinet. The correspondence is registered electronically, with numbers starting with 1 every year, according to the template provided in **annex 4**.

(2) Documents received by e-mail or fax are registered with an M or an F next to the registration number and the date.

(3) The letters received, together with the solutions/answers sent are archived in hard copy and electronically at the department in charge, and electronically at the President’s Cabinet.

(4) In order to draw up the answer to the requests received, the *President’s Cabinet* sends the letter to the department in charge, who will request points of view from other departments involved, if any. Then the proposed answer, drafted with the support of the *International Relations, Projects, Communication and Research Direction*, is submitted to the President/Executive Board/ARACIS Council for approval, as applicable, and forwarded by the *President’s Cabinet to the Organisation, IT, Human Resources and Public Procurement Direction* for mailing. When necessary, before sending the documents for a solution, the *Cabinet* submits them to the President for a resolution.

(5) Internal documents are managed and archived at the Registry service and at the involved compartments.

Art. 42. (1) The following types of contracts are concluded at ARACIS:

- a) Service contracts per types of evaluations;
- b) Individual service contracts concluded with the evaluators included in the RNE of ARACIS;
- c) Individual employment contracts and individual service contracts concluded with the members of the ARACIS Council;
- d) Public procurement contracts for the provision of services/works.

(2) The contracts described in para. (1) of art. 41 are registered at the *Organisation, Human Resources and Public Procurement Direction* (letters a), c) and d)), and the *Legal and Internal Quality Assurance Office* (letter b).



The individual employment contracts and management contracts are registered at the *Human Resources Compartment*, according to the legal provisions in force, and using the REVISAL system, as applicable. Individual service contracts are registered at the *Legal and Internal Quality Assurance Office* and public procurement contracts are registered at the *Public Procurement Compartment*.

(3) Contracts mentioned at para. (1) of art. 41, points a), b) and d) are registered in distinct registers constituted as per **annex 5**. These are numbered starting at 1 every year.

The Regulation on the Organization and Operation of ARACIS was revised and approved by ARACIS Council Decision no. 42/H/29.04.2022.