

SPECIFIC STANDARDS AND GUIDE**FOR EXTERNAL QUALITY EVALUATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAMMES IN DISTANCE LEARNING (DL) AND PART-TIME LEARNING (PTL)****OF SPECIALITY COMMISSION NO. 13 DL/PTL****Contents:**

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Legal framework

- a) *National Education Law no. 1/2011, as amended and supplemented;*
- b) *Law no. 288/24.06.2004 on the organisation of higher education studies, amended by Government Emergency Ordinance no. 78/2005 and Law no. 49/2013;*
- c) *Government Decision no. 404/29.03.2006 on organising and delivering master's studies;*
- d) *Order of the MECTS no. 6560 /2012 and no. 4204 of 15/07.2013 on approving the minimal necessary and mandatory standards for awarding of teaching degrees in higher education and professional degrees in research and development;*
- e) *Order of the MECTS no. 6251/2012 to approve the Framework regulation on organising, implementing, and establishing quotas for teaching activities in distance learning and part-time learning in higher education;*
- f) *Annual Government Decisions approving the List of domains and higher education specialisations/programmes, and the structure of higher education institutions;*
- g) *Government Decision no. 915 of 14 December 2017 modifying the annex to Government Decision no. 1418/2006 approving the Methodology for external evaluation, standards, reference standards and list of performance indicators of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education;*
- h) *Government Decision no. 1011/2001 on the organisation and operation of distance learning and part-time learning in higher education institutions.*

External quality evaluation in higher education, namely the external quality evaluation of higher education study programmes shall be carried out according to the standards, reference standards and performance indicators set forth in the *Methodology for external evaluation* developed by ARACIS and approved by Government Decision no. 915 of 14 December 2017, and to these Specific Standards approved by ARACIS pursuant to Law no. 87/10.04.2006.

The legal basis for the organisation of distance and part-time learning in Romania is provided by the National Education Law no. 1/2011, Emergency Ordinance no. 75/2011 amending and supplementing Government Emergency Ordinance no. 75/2005, and the Order of MECTS no. 6251/2012.

According to the National Education Law no. 1/2011, art. 140 para. (6) as further amended and supplemented, “*higher education study programmes in part-time or distance learning mode may be organised only by higher education institutions which have accredited the respective study programme in full-time education*”.

According to the laws in force, higher education institutions may provide the following distance and part-time learning categories of study programmes:

- a) bachelor studies;
- b) master studies (only in part-time learning);
- c) post-graduate specialisation studies;
- d) post-graduate continuous professional training and development studies;
- e) professional conversion courses.

Purpose of the specific DL/PTL standards

The general purpose of these DL/PTL-specific standards is to complement the legal framework and legislation in force, mentioned above, related to the process of external evaluation of the quality of education in higher education institutions, taking into account the

specific particularities of the bachelor and master's study programmes organised in distance learning (DL) and part-time learning (PTL).

The particular purpose of the specific DL/PTL standards is to give a reference framework for the practice of organising and operating bachelor and master study programmes in DL/PTL mode in order to ensure *homogeneous external quality evaluation*.

The design and the content of teaching-learning and evaluation activities are based on learning outcomes, which include acquiring knowledge¹, competences², attitudes³ and values⁴.

Specific DL/PTL standards are adopted nationally by ARACIS for bachelor studies (in DL/PTL mode) and master studies (in PTL mode).

To this purpose, the aim is to promote the shared standards and principles meant to guarantee quality in organising and delivering study programmes in DL/PTL modes.

1.2 Terminology and abbreviations

The terms and phrases used have the following meanings:

Full-time learning (FTL) is a form of organising study programmes characterised by education and/or research activities being scheduled throughout the entire day, specific to each higher education study cycle, distributed approximately homogeneously, every week/day throughout the semester and entailing direct meetings of students with teaching and research staff within the academic space. According to the National Education law, full-time education requires mandatory attendance.

Part-time learning (PTL) is a form of organising educational processes, which is characterised by teaching-learning-evaluation activities intended for practical training, scheduled in compact or periodic modules, which require both the direct meeting of students/trainees with teaching staff within the academic space and the use of teaching/training means that are specific to distance learning.

Distance learning (DL) is a form of organising educational processes, which offers students/trainees the possibility to personally choose the place and time of acquiring the training. **Distance learning**, also called **distance education, e-learning or online learning**, is characterised by the physical separation of teaching staff and students during the training process, and the use of diverse technologies to facilitate student-teacher and student-student communication. A study programme in distance learning can be offered fully remotely or can be a combination of remote and face-to-face activities conducted at the higher education institution (blended learning). Courses organised to be delivered remotely may use a varied range of training and communication methods, technologies and resources, such as video/audio conferences, internet-based web techniques, digital or printed learning materials.

¹ **Knowledge** is the result of the assimilation, through learning, of a set of facts, principles, theories and practices related to a specific area of work or study domain.

² **Competence** is the proven capacity to select, combine and use in an adequate manner knowledge, abilities and other acquisitions consisting of values and attitudes, for the purpose of successfully solving a specific category of situations at work or in learning, and for the efficient and effective professional or personal development.

³ **Attitude** is a psychological state manifested as a verbal conduct, actional behaviour or in other ways. Attitudes are developed by learning, and are accumulated through unique multiple direct or indirect experiences. Attitudes and behaviours influence each other. **Attitude** is the human behaviour reflected through ethical conduct, integrity, honesty, responsibility, respect for the rights of others, respect for the law, for work, natural environment, society, etc.

⁴ **Values** are acquired through the transmission, development, and capitalisation of human, spiritual, cultural and national qualities and ideals, and implicitly of scientific values that contribute to the progress of scientific knowledge.

Distance learning (DL) and **part-time learning** (PTL) are alternative forms of education providing the possibility for initial training, improvement, or professional re-skilling of a wide category of citizens in various domains.

The study programme (speciality) is a group of curricular teaching, learning, research, practical and evaluation units, planned so as to result in higher education qualification certified by a diploma and a diploma supplement.

Distance learning activities require the following:

- a) availability of learning materials adapted for individual study, produced in DL technology;
- b) delivery of such activities online, in asynchronous or synchronous mode;
- c) availability of computer means and platforms at the institution, to ensure DL-specific teaching, learning, evaluation and communication processes;
- d) ensuring access of students and all staff involved in the educational process to the computer platforms and their resources;
- e) availability of adequate tools for the monitoring and recording of the teaching, learning and evaluation activities conducted in such system.

Face-to-face educational activities entail:

- a) activities scheduled in advance and communicated in due time-through a timetable, which can take place within the university campus or synchronously, online, for instance through video conference systems. In this variant, recording of the activities shall be ensured;
- b) such activities to be mandatory for the students.

Online classes – a manner of organising the activities and providing the resources associated to a subject matter, where teaching and communication are mainly realised by using the internet. The educational process (teaching, learning and evaluation) is achieved remotely, synchronously and/or asynchronously, by using various devices (laptop, mobile phone, tablet, etc.) connected to the internet.

Synchronous online classes – classes where students and professors attend simultaneously, but from separate locations, generally other than the university campus. Synchronous education implies a structured learning strategy, where educational activities are scheduled at times communicated in due time, and are delivered to study groups named virtual classrooms, where students have interactions in real time. These classes can be delivered via video conference, web conference, audio conference, etc.

Asynchronous online classes – classes where students do not participate in educational activities at the same time as the teaching staff, and the learning content is supplied through study resources that students can access. The education process is based on printed or digital materials intended for individual study, implemented on specialised e-learning teaching, learning and evaluation management platforms. Asynchronous online classes do not entail real-time interaction between the participants.

Study programme in distance learning – a study programme authorised for provisional operation/accredited, which can be taken entirely through classes delivered remotely, including online classes, where educational activities are organised

prevailingly remotely. These can be delivered in synchronous or asynchronous mode, as well as in the form of blended learning.

DL-technology learning materials – materials pertaining to DL/PTL study programmes, which are adapted for self-learning, and are fully produced using DL technology⁵.

Other types of educational resources offered online

OER (open educational resources) – online learning materials offered free of charge to be used by teaching staff and students/trainees, with or without limitations related to how these materials can be adapted and reused.

MOOC (massive open online courses) – online courses designed to be accessed by a large number of participants, often provided for free, with no preconditions and no qualification certification. These are different from OER in that they provide complete educational experience, and the content of the courses is not free for reuse.

Abbreviations used in the ARACIS standards

Abbreviation	Meaning
Types of activities included in the curriculum plan for: FTL/PTL/DL	
AA	Assisted practical activities
AI	self-learning activities
AF	Face to face activities
AT	Tutoring activities
C	Teaching activities / Course
Clv	Colloquium
E	Exam
FV	Verification / Verification test
L	Laboratory / Practical works
P	Project
Pr	Speciality internship
S	Seminar activities
SF	Face to face seminar
SI	Individual study
ST	Tutored seminar
TC	Control paper / Continuous evaluation
V	Continuous verification
Types of subject matters included in the curriculum plan	
DC	Complementary subject matter
DD	Domain subject matter
DF	Fundamental subject matter
DFc	Elective subject matter
DOb	Mandatory subject matter
DOp	Optional subject matter
DS	Speciality subject matter
Other acronyms	
CEAC	Evaluation and Quality Assurance Commission
DAC	Quality Assurance Department
CIDIFR	Distance Education and Part-Time Education Centre
DIDIFR	Distance Education and Part-Time Education Department
DD	Doctoral study domain

⁵ Refer to §3.4.3

Abbreviation	Meaning
DL	Bachelor study domain
DM	Master study domain
DMC	Quality Management Department
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EQF	European qualification framework for lifelong learning
DL	Distance learning
FTL	Full-time learning
PTL	Part-time learning
HEI	Higher education institution
IOSUD	Institution organising doctoral studies
ISCED	International standard classification of education
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
LLL	Lifelong learning
REI	Internal evaluation report (self-evaluation report)
SNIS	National Higher Education System
ICT	Information and communication technology

2 SPECIFIC STANDARDS FOR THE EVALUATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION STUDIES IN DISTANCE LEARNING (DL) AND PART-TIME LEARNING (PTL)

2.1 Particularities of distance learning and part-time learning

The developments in information and communication technologies (ICT) produced essential changes both in terms of the methods and techniques for acquiring learning outcomes and of the way in which study programmes are provided in higher education institutions. In this respect, distance learning (DL) and part-time learning (PTL) focus more on how students learn, and less on where they learn.

By its nature, *distance learning* is a flexible form of education, providing students/trainees with the possibility to choose the place and time of their training. Furthermore, distance learning provides students with the possibility to study individually and conduct education activities in groups.

Distance learning entails organising activities of the education process (teaching-learning and evaluation) where students/trainees are physically separated in time and space from the education institution, and communicate with it synchronously or asynchronously, using specific means.

Distance learning entails using information and communication technologies adapted to self-learning and self-evaluation, complemented by specific tutoring activities.

Distance learning involves using a wide range of resources and technologies, materials printed or digital materials adapted for individual study, available on information platforms or other means of storage. These are adapted to the diversity of content in the educational process.

Part-time learning provides students with the possibility to manage their learning process while complying with the timetable created by the university. As a rule, assisted education activities are scheduled on weekends. Part-time education shares some of its characteristics both with full-time learning and with distance learning. Thus, courses are studied individually, and the students are provided with learning materials adapted for individual study and self-learning processes.

Part-time learning is characterised by education activities intended prevalently for practical training, scheduled in compact or periodic modules, which require both the direct meeting of students with teaching staff within the academic space and the use of educational means that are specific to distance learning.

2.1.1 Organisation of DL/PTL study programmes

Only higher education institutions which have an accreditation for that education programme in full-time learning may organise bachelor study programmes (in DL/PTL) and master programmes (in PTL).

The initiation, development, implementation, and management of DL/PTL study programmes takes place in specialised institutional structures organised at the level of universities or faculties, called DL/PTL Departments or Centres (DIDIFR/CIDIFR). These shall be established by Decision of the university senate.

The DL/PTL Departments or Centres shall be organised and operate based on an internal regulation approved by the university Senate. The DL/PTL Department or Centre shall be led by a board chaired by a *Director*.

DL/PTL Departments or Centres shall establish lists of functions adequate to the DL/PTL study programmes, which shall be approved by the university Senate.

Post-graduate continuous professional training and development programmes in DL/PTL mode may be organised by those higher education institutions that host at least bachelor and master degree programmes accredited in that scientific domain.

Higher education diplomas and certificates issued by higher education institutions for the same specialities/higher education study programmes are equivalent, irrespective of the form of education or tuition language.

A higher education study programme operates legally if it is authorised for provisional operation or accredited, and if it is conducted as provided by the law.

The provisional operation authorisation, accreditation, and periodic evaluation are public recognition processes according to which the DL/PTL study programmes provided by a higher education institution comply with the minimum requirements established by the specific standards and performance indicators pertaining to the provisional operation authorisation, accreditation or periodic evaluation.

The provisional operation authorisation, accreditation, and periodic evaluation of study programmes provide the guarantee for the beneficiaries of DL/PTL forms of education that the education institution has:

- a) curricula equivalent to those provided in the FTL form of education, which include activities that are specific to DL or PTL;
- b) personnel qualified to use DL technologies;
- c) learning resources, computer equipment, and information platforms adequate for teaching, learning, evaluation, communication;
- d) financial resources to carry out the study programmes;
- e) a quality management policy and a policy to promote DL/PTL study programmes, aligned to the principles of professional ethics.

The provisional operation authorisation, the accreditation, and the periodic evaluation of higher education programmes shall be performed distinctly for each form of education (DL or PTL), for each tuition language, and each geographic location where such programmes are provided.

The provisional operation authorisation, the accreditation, and the periodic evaluation of a bachelor study programme organised in DL or PTL, and the maximum number of students that can be schooled in the programme in an academic year shall be established by Government Decision, following the external evaluation performed by ARACIS.

2.1.2 Organisation of the education process

To organise *the education process in DL*, the subject matters included in the curriculum shall be scheduled according to the duration of schooling in the full-time (FTL) form of learning. To ensure equivalence of the forms of education, the following types of activities shall be carried out under each subject matter:

- a) *tutoring activities* (AT), which consist of face-to-face meetings in the university campus and/or synchronous online meetings via information platforms, and *continuous evaluation based on control papers* (TC), preferably via information platforms, in asynchronous online mode, which are the equivalent of seminar classes in full-time learning (FTE). These activities shall be organised per groups/sub-groups;
- b) *assisted practical activities* (AA), which are the equivalent of laboratory classes, project activities or practical activities in full-time education. These activities shall be organised face to face in the university campus, or online in synchronous mode, per groups/sub-groups;
- c) the course (teaching) classes of the full-time learning are compensated by self-learning

activities (AI) based on learning resources that are specific to DL.

To organise *the education process in PTL*, the subject matters included in the curriculum shall be scheduled according to the duration of schooling in full-time learning. To ensure equivalence of the forms of education, the following types of activities shall be carried out under each subject matter:

- a) *seminar activities* (S), which consist of face-to-face meetings organised in the university campus and/or online in synchronous mode via information platforms, with the same number of seminar hours as in FTL. These activities shall be organised per groups/sub-groups;
- b) *practical activities* (L, LP, P) – laboratory activities, practical activities, project activities, speciality internship, with the same number of hours as in full-time education. These activities shall be organised face to face in the university campus / online in synchronous mode, per groups/sub-groups;
- c) the course (teaching) classes of the full-time education are compensated by *self-training activities* (AI) based on learning resources that are specific to DL.

Table 1. Summary of indicators related to the organisation of the education process in bachelor DL/PTL study programmes

INDICATOR	Level
1. Duration of studies and total number of minimum mandatory credits in DL/PTL	a) 3 years = 6 sem. = 180 ECTS b) 4 years = 8 sem.= 240 ECTS c) 5 years = 10 sem.= 300 ECTS d) 6 years = 12 sem.= 360 ECTS
2. Duration of one semester in terms of the educational activity	14 weeks
3. Minimum number of mandatory credits per semester	30 ECTS
4. Number of credits allocated for passing the study completion exam	10 ECTS
5. Number of hours allocated for one ECTS credit	25 hours
6. Minimum number of weeks for exam sessions per semester	according to the specific standards for the evaluated study programme domain
7. Minimum number of weeks for resit sessions	1 week
8. Maximum number of students in a PTE group	according to the specific standards for the evaluated study programme domain
10. Maximum number of students in a DE group	25
11. Maximum student-to-teacher ratio in the study programme	according to the specific standards for the evaluated study programme domain

Table 2. Summary of indicators related to the organisation of the education process in master PTL study programmes

INDICATOR	Level
1. Duration of studies and total number of minimum mandatory credits in PTL	a) 1 year = 2 sem. = 60 ECTS b) 1.5 years = 3 sem. = 90 ECTS c) 2 years = 4 sem.= 120 ECTS
2. Duration of one semester in terms of the educational activity	14 weeks
3. Number of mandatory credits per semester	30 ECTS
4. Number of credits allocated for passing the dissertation exam	10 ECTS
5. Number of hours allocated for one ECTS credit	25 hours

INDICATOR	Level
6. Minimum number of weeks for exam sessions per semester	according to the specific standards for the evaluated study programme domain
7. Minimum number of weeks for resit sessions	1 week
8. Maximum number of students in a group	according to the specific standards for the evaluated study programme domain
10. Maximum student-to-teacher ratio in the study programme	according to the specific standards for the evaluated study programme domain

2.1.3 Teaching staff

The teaching staff involved in DL/PTL activities includes *study programme coordinators*, *subject matter coordinators*, and teaching staff leading seminars, practical or laboratory works, project guidance, speciality internships and auxiliary teaching staff.

The subject matter tutor guides the student/trainee throughout the DL study programme. Guidance is done individually and/or in groups, through direct - face-to-face - meetings in the university campus or online, in synchronous or asynchronous mode, via information platforms, and consists of study guidance and periodic evaluation of the academic development of the students/trainees.

2.1.4 Quotas for teaching activities

Quotas for teaching activities specific to DL/PTL forms of education shall be established in lists of functions that are distinct from those for full-time learning, and are managed by the DL/PTL Department/Centre according to the laws in force.

Quotas for the activities of the teaching staff involved in DL/PTL activities shall be established according to the internal regulations developed by the DL/PTL Department/Centre and approved by the university Senate, according to OMCTS no. 6251/2012. The regulations shall cover the activities that are specific for the educational technologies that are designed, developed and implemented by the university within the DL and PTL forms of education.

Quotas for teaching activities specific to part-time learning shall be established as follows:

- ❑ *seminar activities, practical and laboratory works, project guidance, etc.* shall have quotas similar to those pertaining to full-time education, based on the number of hours specified in the curricula.

Quotas for teaching activities specific to distance learning shall be established as follows:

- ❑ *face-to-face tutoring activities*, including synchronous activities conducted via information platforms shall have quotas similar to the seminar hours pertaining to full-time learning, based on the number of hours specified in the curricula;
- ❑ *the quota for remote tutoring activities*, including asynchronous activities conducted on information platforms, student/trainee support activities, and continuous evaluation activities shall be 1-3 hours / group / week. The sum of the total number of hours allocated for *face-to-face tutoring activities and remote tutoring activities* must be at least equal to the number of seminar hours in full-time learning.
- ❑ the quotas for the *development and management of learning resources available on information platforms* shall be 2-4 hours / group / semester / subject matter;
- ❑ the quotas for *assisted practical activities* - laboratory works, practical works, project guidance, speciality internships, etc. shall be similar to full-time learning, based on the number of hours specified in the curricula.

The quotas for designing and producing specific educational resources for distance and part-time learning in printed and/or digital form shall be 120-140 hours for each subject matter, and the related tariff shall be established by Decision of the university Senate upon the proposal of the DL/PTL Department/Centre. The number of hours established as a quota for the periodic updating of existing educational resources shall be proportional with the share of updated content.

2.2 Procedures for the provisional authorising, accreditation and periodic evaluation of higher education study programmes organised in DL/PTL

The higher education institution that intends to organise study programmes in DL/PTL shall use the same general principles and specific standards as those used in full-time learning for that study domain, while taking into consideration the specificities of each education technology.

The quality evaluation procedure for DL/PTL study programmes takes place through internal evaluation within the higher education institution, external evaluation conducted by ARACIS, and it shall be completed by applying the recommendations resulted from the two evaluations.

DL/PTL study programmes can be organised and delivered in partnership, by consortia set up according to the laws in force. In this case, the application for the provisional operation authorisation/accreditation/periodic evaluation of the DL/PTL study programmes shall be filed by one accredited higher education institution, which was declared as the coordinating institution. The external evaluation visit shall take place at the headquarters of this institution, as well as at any location that is relevant for the education process.

In the case of a partnership, the higher education institution that coordinated the DL/PTL study programmes shall draft an internal evaluation report for each study programme to be evaluated based on the criteria established by law for the organisation and operation of DE/PTE in higher education, and based on the methodology developed by ARACIS.

According to the ARACIS methodology, for the **provisional operation authorisation, accreditation** or **periodic evaluation** of DL/PTL study programmes, the higher education institution shall provide documents to prove that the following are in place:

- a) strategies and policies for the development of DL technologies, integrated with the general institutional development and quality assurance strategies;
- b) administrative and managerial structures that ensure the organisation, development, implementation, and management of DL/PTL study programmes;
- c) clear educational processes specific to DL/PTL, which are known by the entire academic community and included in the institution's educational strategy;
- d) secured financial resources for the optimal deployment of the DL/PTL study programme;
- e) adequate logistics to provide support and services for students/trainees;
- f) educational resources that are specific to DL technology, in printed and digital format;
- g) teaching staff and a network of tutors including speciality teachers trained in DL technology for all the subject matters in the curriculum;
- h) teaching, learning and evaluation information platforms, including an academic management information system. These shall be functional, secured, and efficient for the DL/PTL-specific teaching procedures adopted by the higher education institution;
- i) tools to monitor and record the activities conducted via the information platforms used in the education process;
- j) specific DL/PTL educational process quality assurance procedures.

In order to obtain a provisional operation authorisation in DL/PTL, the higher education institution shall provide documentary evidence to prove that financial resources and the DL learning resources are secured for at least one

study cycle. Learning resources include learning materials realised in DL technology, in printed and/or digital format, posted on communication, teaching and learning information platforms, for at least the first year of a cycle. All the information / electronic means used shall be fully functional.

For the accreditation or the periodic evaluation, the higher education institution shall provide documentary evidence that they conduct activities specific to DL/PTL, in line with the specific reference standards and performance indicators for the entire study cycle. For the external evaluation, the institution shall prove that the study resources for all subject matters included in the curriculum for the study programme undergoing evaluation are posted on the teaching, learning and evaluation information platforms. On the occasion of the external evaluation of a study programme, the higher education institution shall provide information stored on the information platforms about all learning and continuous evaluation activities, for all enrolled students. Furthermore, the academic management information system shall include all data regarding schooling, as well as information related to tuition fees and the progress in collecting such fees.

After analysing the internal evaluation report and verifying compliance with the specific DL/PTL criteria, and following the visit to the applicant institution and the report of the Experts' Commission, the ARACIS Council shall validate the external evaluation report and propose the line ministry to award or, as applicable, not award the provisional operation authorisation or the accreditation/no accreditation or the continuation/withdrawal of the accreditation.

The time limit for submitting the application for accreditation may not exceed two years after graduation of the first class of graduates in DL/PTL; periodic evaluations shall be conducted every 5 years.

The external evaluation procedure for DL/PTL study programmes is based on a set of requirements defined by the standards, reference standards, and performance indicators.

The organisation, implementation, management and operation domains are the following:

- 1. DL technology integration strategies and policies;**
- 2. Administrative and managerial structures**
- 3. Designing the structure of study programmes in DL/PTL**
- 4. Learning resources. Specific infrastructure;**
- 5. Support for students, teaching staff, and auxiliary teaching staff;**
- 6. Evaluation of learning outcomes;**
- 7. Assuring quality of the teaching staff;**
- 8. Quality assurance of DL/PTL programmes;**
- 9. Public information.**

3 STRUCTURE OF THE INTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

The structure and content of an *internal evaluation report (REI)* is presented for the purpose of ensuring a homogeneous external quality evaluation process for the evaluation of higher education study programmes organised in DL/PTL forms of education.

The *internal evaluation report* is a document containing fundamental information on compliance with the standards, reference standards, and performance indicators associated with the DL/PTL methodology.

Applicant institutions may present other information as well in the *internal evaluation report*, accompanied by the documents they deem relevant for the purpose of obtaining the provisional operation authorisation, the accreditation or the periodic evaluation of DLPTL study programmes, in a chapter dedicated to *specific elements of the evaluated institution or study programme*.

The internal evaluation report shall be endorsed by the quality assurance and evaluation structure and the structure ensuring the implementation and management of DL/PTL study programmes at the applicant institution - the DL/PTL Department/Centre.

In the case of consortia or partnerships, the coordinating higher education institution shall include in the internal evaluation report all the data and documents concerning the partners and the ways in which they participate in the evaluated study programme.

The internal evaluation report shall include:

- a) The cover title page (*Template-DL/PTL study programme*);
- b) The content, with the title of the chapters of the internal evaluation report and the list of annexes;
- c) A summary describing the profile of the higher education institution, including basic data that define it, its mission, and objectives;
- d) The content of the internal evaluation report, structured according to the Specific DL/PTL Standards;
- e) Annexes.

Technical aspects related to the presentation of the internal evaluation report:

- a) Print on white A4 paper, on both sides of the paper.
- b) Times/Calibri font family type, 12 pt., single line spacing.
- c) No more than 40 pages, and for the digital format of the report -
- d) Reference to the annexes must allow automatic opening of those annexes through hypertext links.
- e) Pages shall be numbered, and the name of the higher education institution shall be mentioned in the upper or lower side of each page.
- f) Annexes and additional documents shall be placed in distinct folders.
- g) The *internal evaluation report* shall be submitted to the ARACIS Records Office in one original printed copy, and in digital format on 3 external media.
- h) The digital format shall include only documents signed by hand/electronically and sealed, as applicable, scanned and saved in .pdf file format, organised according to the aforementioned evaluation requirements.
- i) To enable easy identification of the files, the file names shall indicate the content of the documents.
- j) The full digital format of the *internal evaluation report* (including its annexes) shall be posted in archived form on the information platform/website of the higher education institution, and the manner in which expert evaluators will access it shall be communicated by official letter to ARACIS.

University registration no.

INTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

Data presented to the ARACIS Accreditation Department by:

Higher education institution: _____

Faculty: _____

Bachelor/master domain: _____

Title of the higher education study programme: _____

Form of education: _____

Number of credits: _____

External evaluation objective: (*provisional operation authorisation/accreditation/periodic evaluation*) _____

Contact person: _____

Tel: _____ e-mail: _____

The data contained in this Report are complete, correct, and compliant with the principles of professional ethics.

Rector,
Seal

Director of the DL/PTL Department/Centre

ARACIS registration no. _____

3.1 Strategies and policies regarding DL/PTL

Higher education institutions have clearly defined policies and managerial processes in place, used for achieving the strategic educational objectives at institutional level, which include initiation, development, and management of DL/PTL forms of education.

The DL/PTL development plans are included in the educational strategy of the higher education institution, and include priority actions regarding the organisation and implementation of these forms of education; means of evaluating the impact that these forms of education have on administrative processes, recording of students' activities, and traditional teaching processes at the level of the institution.

The strategic plan highlights the higher education institution's own vision of the pedagogic concepts applied in DL/PTL, the implementation, use, and management of these concepts at the level of the institution, and provides a clear view on the application of such concepts in time.

The strategic plan takes into account the human, technical, and financial resources needed for implementing the educational strategies entailed by DL/PTL, and mainly addresses the following: the purchase of specific equipment and software; recruitment of specialised personnel; training needs for the periodic training of teaching and auxiliary staff; management, maintenance and security of the data regarding the students' professional training, etc.

The academic development plans of the faculties and departments, related to using specific DL technologies and combining them with traditional, face-to-face methods are correlated with the institution's strategic plan, providing students with virtual mobility at the level of the institution and beyond.

Educational concepts and technologies used by distance education and part-time learning provide opportunities for implementing study programmes, ensuring increased flexibility in terms of the place and time of studying, and providing students and teaching staff with a chance to participate in virtual academic communities.

The strategic plans of higher education institutions may also include policies related to virtual mobility in the online space, and they are designed in a way that ensures students are provided with the possibility to take study programmes or parts of study programmes in partner institutions which are geographically away from their place or residence or even outside the country. Partner institutions in virtual mobility programmes take all steps to ensure that the evaluation of the acquired learning outcomes is relevant and well documented.

The strategic plans of the higher education institution include a set of activities aimed at improving the framework of implementation of the DL/PTL study programmes through more efficient use of the implemented equipment and technologies and improved pedagogic approaches, based on best practices in the field.

3.1.1 Performance indicators

1. The higher education institution has management structures and personnel in charge with organising, developing, and evaluating the institutional policies and plans specific to DL/PTL forms of education.
2. The strategic plans of the institution take into consideration all the resources needed for installing and maintaining the infrastructure pertaining to the educational services specific to DL/PTL forms of education. These include both the initial investment in equipment, software etc., and the costs with the updating, reconfiguring, and replacement cycles.
3. Collaboration with other institutions in designing and conducting study programmes in DL/PTL forms of education is formalised in partnership contracts, including contracts for speciality internships. Such contracts clearly define the purpose of the collaboration; responsibilities of the partners; financial commitments, and the relationship with students

and teaching staff.

4. The higher education institution has research and innovation strategies and activities in the field of DL/PTL, covering both technical and pedagogic aspects.
5. The higher education institution accepts the benefits of DL technology in achieving virtual mobility of the students, and has a set of clear policies for its promotion, deployment, and evaluation. Policies regarding virtual mobility in the online space are evaluated periodically, and the results are analysed systematically.

3.1.2 Documents presented by the higher education institution

1. The university charter - the part which concerns the organisation of different forms of education;
2. The chapter of the strategic plan of the higher education institution, where the strategies for the development and management of DL-specific educational technologies are presented;
3. Organisational and operational regulations for the educational activities in the higher education institutions, indicating how educational activities specific to DL/PTL forms of education are organised and managed;
4. Partnership contracts with other institutions, including contracts regarding speciality internships, regarding promotion and deployment of the DL/PTL study programmes.

3.2 Administrative and managerial structures

The higher education institution that initiates study programmes in DL/PTL proves that it meets all the requirements under the laws in force and the ARACIS methodology regarding the organisation and management of such programmes.

3.2.1 DL/PTL Departments/Centres

The initiation, development, and management of DL/PTL study programmes takes place in specialised institutional structures organised at the level of universities or faculties, called DL/PTL departments or centres. These shall be established by decision of the university senate.

The DL/PTL Departments or Centres shall be organised and operate based on an internal regulation approved by the university Senate. DL/PTL Departments or Centres make these regulations available for the public.

DL/PTL Departments or Centres collaborate with faculties and teaching departments within the higher education institutions in carrying out the study programmes, with respect to the curricula, the syllabi, the teaching staff, the material resources, etc.

The DL/PTL Department or Centre is led by a director who has managerial responsibilities for the entire DL/PTL process carried out at the level of the higher education institution/faculty. The director must have proven qualification and experience in DL technology and management of such technology.

The DL/PTL Department or Centre is directly responsible for ensuring the quality of the DL/PTL teaching materials, managing the information platforms, continuous training of staff, organising support services for students, monitoring the quality assurance system for assuring the quality of the individual and group communication with students, internal evaluation of the information and documents included in the internal evaluation report for the purpose of obtaining the provisional operation authorisation/accreditation/periodic evaluation.

3.2.2 Performance indicators

1. The management of DL/PTL study programmes is carried out in specialised institutional structures called DL/PTL Departments/Centres, whose activity is subordinated to the higher education institution.
2. DL/PTL Departments or Centres, in collaboration with the faculties and the teaching departments, provide the following services:
 - providing correct information for candidates and students on the study programmes provided, the type of diplomas obtained upon graduation, enrolment requirements, services offered, tuition fees, any additional costs, evaluation procedures, education and communication technologies used;
 - access of all students enrolled in a DL/PTL study programme to all specific support services: assistance with the enrolment; financial options; educational assistance; delivery of education resources; access to communication means; adequate tutoring support; provision of the records of achieved results, and professional advice;
 - operative solving of the notices and requests of the students enrolled in DL/PTL, through an adequate system, regulated at the level of the institution;
 - management of the communication infrastructure between students, teaching staff and administrative staff, through various means;
 - periodic training on DL technologies for the teaching and administrative staff of the university/faculty, who is involved in DL/PTL study programmes. The DL/PTL Department/Centre is responsible with the periodic training of staff, including on using information platforms, and shall keep evidence to document the training sessions.
3. The institution has a clear, transparent policy regarding the production of educational resources and ensuring copyrights, distribution of such resources, use of and access to information technologies, use of virtual libraries, multimedia materials and means.
4. DL/PTL Departments/Centres inform the students of the existence of educational resources, the use of and access to information technologies, virtual libraries, multimedia materials and means.

3.2.3 Documents presented by the higher education institution

1. Proof of accreditation of the study programme in full-time learning (copy of the last Official Gazette);
2. For the purpose of accreditation, proof of the provisional authorisation to operate the study programme in DL/PTL (copy of the Official Gazette);
3. For the periodic evaluation, proof of accreditation of the DL/PTL study programme (copy of the Official Gazette);
4. Decision of the university Senate regarding organisation of the study programme in the DL/PTL form of education;
5. Decision of the university Senate on the organising and operation of the DL and/or PTL Department/Centre;
6. The organisational and operational regulations of the DL/PTL Department/Centre, and the decision of the university Senate on approving such regulations;

7. The charts showing the relationships between the DL/PTL Department/Centre and the faculties and structures of the organising institution;
8. The list of members of the managerial and administrative team of the DL/PTL Department/Centre, with the responsibilities of its members;
9. CVs of the members of the managerial team, in *Europass* format, which must highlight their DL/PTL experience on the first page, in the “*Professional experience in DL/PTL*” column
10. Presentation of the actual way in which the activities are carried out in the DL/PTL study programme (no more than 4 pages). The presentation must include explicitly:
 - a) the design of the educational activities and of the pedagogic concepts used;
 - b) the design, realisation and distribution of educational resources;
 - c) how communication between students/trainees and teaching staff is achieved;
 - d) performance of the remote and face-to-face tutoring activities;
 - e) continuous and final evaluation.
11. *The Guide on counselling students on taking the DL/PTL study programme*, which shall include:
 - a) counselling for students on DL technology;
 - b) ethical norms related to the use of internet-based technologies for accessing educational resources provided through information platforms.

3.3 Designing the structure of study programmes in DL/PTL

A higher education study programme is a group of curricular teaching, learning, research, practical application and evaluation units meant to result in a higher education qualification certified through a diploma and a diploma supplement.

The structure of the higher education study programme shall be approved by the university Senate, and be aligned to the qualification profile, as defined in the National Framework of Higher Education Qualifications (CNCIS) and registered in the National Register of Higher Education Qualifications (RNCIS).

3.3.1 Student admission

Every higher education institution shall draft and apply its own regulations on organising and conducting the admission to the study programmes it provides. These regulations shall be developed according to the framework methodology developed annually by the line ministry.

Admission may be organised by the faculties of higher education institutions solely for those study programmes authorised for provisional operation or accredited in DL/PTL. The selection of candidates for the study programmes organised in DL/PTL shall be based on the admission methodology approved by the university Senate.

After the admission, the higher education institution shall sign a *higher education study contract* with each student enrolled in a DL/PTL study programme, according to the provisions of the regulations on organising and delivering study programmes and in compliance with the laws in force.

Delivery of the curriculum shall be regulated annually through the Annual study contract/Addendum to the *Higher education study contract*, signed by the student and the legal representative of the faculty organising the study programme in DL/PTL.

3.3.1.1 *Performance indicators*

1. The candidate enrolment and selection shall be carried out according to the admission methodology approved by the university Senate, in line with the regulations of the line ministry, within the limits of the schooling capacity (the maximum number of students that can be schooled, according to the Government Decision passed in the current year).
2. Admission sessions for DL/PTL study programmes shall be carried out according to the admission methodology approved by the Senate of the higher education institution.
3. In order to enrol the admitted candidates, a *higher education study contract* must be concluded and signed by the higher education institution and the student. A copy of this document shall be given to the student.
4. The data of the students enrolled in DL/PTL shall be managed using a secured information system, compatible with the centralised data collection system of the university.
5. The *higher education study contract* shall specify the exact title of the study programme; the duration of studies; the diploma obtained upon completion; the services provided to the students in exchange for the tuition fee; the facilities and all the obligations that the education institution is in charge for; the student's financial and study-related rights and obligations; the obligation to provide the materials required for individual training; the terms for withdrawal and return of the tuition fees. Furthermore, the contract must specify the students' obligation to own the equipment required for accessing the internet.
6. The content of the *annual study contract/addendum of the annual higher education study contract* shall include the excerpt of the current year's curriculum, which regulates that the programme is taken within the transferable credit system, and lays down the requirements for graduation.
7. The *higher education study contract* and the *annual study contract/addendum* may not be amended during the academic year.

3.3.1.2 *Documents presented by the higher education institution*

- 1) Admission methodology of the university, approved by the institution's Senate;
- 2) Model of *higher education study contract*;
- 3) Model of *annual study contract/addendum* to the *higher education study contract*.
- 4) The number of places announced for competition (academic provision), and the schooling capacity as approved by Government Decision for the evaluated study programme, in the last five years (according to Annex C4.).
- 5) A summary of the enrolments into the evaluated study programme in DL/PTL within the last five years (as per Annex C5.).

3.3.2 *Structure and relevance of DL/PTL study programmes*

Distance learning and part-time learning rely on educational technologies that are flexible in terms of teaching, learning and evaluation, which entail both face-to-face activities and remote activities via information platforms. In both forms of education, teaching, learning, and learning outcome evaluation are carried out based on learning materials designed specifically to ensure a high level of self-learning and self-evaluation.

Educational activities aimed at developing practical competences/abilities (laboratory work, project work, practical works, etc.) shall take place in person, in the campus / online, in synchronous mode, per groups/subgroups.

For each study programme, and particularly for each subject matter in the study programme, the higher education institution shall analyse the optimal combination between online technology (video conferences, virtual laboratory sessions, etc.) and traditional face-to-face activities. Distance learning and part-time learning are forms of integrated education, which the speciality literature refers to as Blended Learning.

The higher education institution offering DL/PTL study programmes shall draft the curricula in line with its mission and objectives, in order to ensure tuition that is equivalent to that in full-time learning. DL/PTL programmes are organised based on curricula approved for the same study programmes in full-time learning, and include educational activities that are specific to DL/PTL.

The subject matters, the number of credits assigned for the subject matters, and the forms of final evaluation are the same as in the curriculum pertaining to the programme offered in full-time learning

The educational and communication resources of information platforms provide the possibility, in the case of DL/PTL study programmes, to create virtual communities between teaching staff and students, as well as between groups of students. In a study programme, the time, place, and pace of studying may be scheduled in a highly flexible manner. The content of the subject matters may be taught remotely through specific resources, and the customised interaction between students and teaching staff, including tutors, is the key component supporting learning. Therefore, when designing the structure of study programmes, learning activities must be provided, during which the participants in the education process meet face to face. These may be meetings scheduled for seminars (in PTL), laboratory sessions, project works, practical works, etc. (in DL and PTL). On the other hand, synchronous online meetings facilitated by video conferences, etc. may be organised as well.

The higher education institution offering DL/PTL study programmes shall develop and implement learning outcome evaluation systems that are equivalent to the traditional ones in terms of efficiency, wholeness, and integrity.

The formative (continuous) and summative (final) evaluation focus on learning outcomes, provide students with feedback, and makes the basis for designing the structure of the curricula and the educational resources.

The evaluation organising methodology, the knowledge and competences tested, the matching between the learning outcomes and the grades must be identical for any form of education corresponding to a specific study programme within a higher education institution. Evaluation methodologies shall be approved by the university senate and seek to ensure quality and compliance with the provisions of the Code of ethics and academic conduct.

Formative (continuous) evaluation in DL/PTL study programmes may include self-evaluation tests with indications and answers; check tests, practical tests, etc., integrated in the learning materials and/or posted on the information platforms, which students may use to evaluate their own progress and reflect on their future approach on learning.

In the case of DL/PTL study programmes, the summative (final) evaluation is identical to the evaluation in full-time learning.

3.3.2.1 Performance indicators

1. The structure and content of the DL/PTL study programmes are aligned with the profile of the qualifications, as defined in the National Framework of Higher Education Qualifications, and with the best practice codes in the field; they are approved by the university Senate and evaluated systematically against the quality standards and the beneficiaries' expectations.

2. The specificity of these education forms shall be considered when developing DL/PTL study programmes, in order to offer students high flexibility of studying in terms of the time, place, and pace of learning. This approach is fully aligned with the beneficiaries' expectations in terms of learning outcomes, and promotes an integrated formative and summative evaluation system.
3. When planning the educational activities pertaining to a DL/PTL study programme, an integrated approach (Blended Learning) shall be considered, allowing efficient combination of online individual or group activities with traditional, face-to-face activities. In order to make efficient use of the available human and material resources, DL/PTL study programmes are developed in a modular structure.
4. The procedures for designing the structure of DL/PTL study programmes consider the particularities related to the implementation of efficient online formative evaluation and, respectively, of an efficient summative evaluation process through exams/colloquia or other forms of final evaluation. Evaluation procedures are well documented, monitored permanently, and the staff involved in grading is trained to ensure identification and securing of the individual papers of the students and application of homogeneous grading criteria.
5. The structure of study programmes organised in the DL form of education is focused on the active online participation of the entire academic community, through interactions on information platforms between students and teaching staff, with other students, and between students and the staff managing the study programmes.
6. Study programmes in DL/PTL forms of education are organised based on the curricula approved for the same study programmes organised in full-time learning, as follows:

A. For DL:

- A.1. The scheduling of the subject matters in the curriculum pertaining to the DL form of education is aligned with the duration of schooling in full-time learning (FTL). To ensure equivalence of the forms of education, the following types of activities shall be quantified under each subject matter:
 - a) *tutoring activities (AT)*, which consist of face-to-face meetings in the university campus/synchronous online meetings via information platforms, and *continuous evaluation based on control papers (TC)*, preferably via information platforms, in asynchronous online mode, which are the equivalent of seminar classes in full-time learning. These activities shall be organised per groups/sub-groups;
 - b) *assisted practical activities (AA)*, which are the equivalent of laboratory classes, project activities or practice internships in full-time learning. As a rule, these activities are organised face-to-face in the campus/online in synchronous mode (*with the approval of the department in charge with managing that subject matter*), per groups/sub-groups;
 - c) the course (teaching) classes of the full-time learning are compensated by individual studying (SI) - (hereinafter renamed as *self-learning activities (AI)*⁶), based on learning resources that are specific to DL.

A.2. Assisted practical activities (AA) include the same number of hours as provided in the curricula for FTL, and are carried out throughout the semester in which they are scheduled. Scheduling AA activities in bundles before exam sessions shall be avoided. The higher education study contract shall specify that attending the assisted practical activities is mandatory. These activities are included in the syllabus and in the schedule of the subject matter, and the periods when they are to be conducted is specified explicitly.

⁶ In order to avoid confusion and overlapping with the phrase "individual studying (SI)" as used for full-time learning

- A.3. At least two tutoring activities (AT) shall be scheduled per semester for each subject matter; such activities shall be carried out in direct face-to-face meetings in the campus and/or online in synchronous mode via information platforms.
- A.4. The number of credits assigned for the subject matters, and the form of final evaluation are the same as in the curriculum pertaining to the programme offered in FTL.
- A.5. The DL curriculum is structured in line with *Annex A1-ID*. The number of hours of *self-learning activities* (AI) in the DL curriculum is given by the number of teaching (course) classes in the FTL curriculum.
- A.6. The syllabi in the DL curriculum are equivalent to those pertaining to full-time learning, and include the learning outcomes and how these will be evaluated, the contents of the educational activities and the required reading list (specifying the pages from which the learning resources will be used). The syllabus has a structure in which the activities specific to DL (AI, AT, TC, AA) are specified, with their pertaining number of hours and the forms of evaluation (continuous and final), and their weight in the final grade.
- A.7. The syllabi are accompanied by the schedules of DL educational activities, as per *Annex A2-ID*
- A.8. At the time of the visit, the institution shall present the syllabi pertaining to that study programme in FTL, for the team to ascertain that the higher education institution ensures the same learning outcomes in FTL and DL.

B. For PTL:

- B.1. The scheduling of the subject matters in the curriculum pertaining to the PTL form of education is aligned with the duration of schooling in full-time learning. To ensure equivalence of the forms of education, the following types of activities shall be quantified under each subject matter:
- seminar activities* (S), which consist of face-to-face meetings organised in the university campus/online in synchronous mode via information platforms, with the same number of seminar hours as in FTL. These activities shall be organised per groups/sub-groups;
 - practical activities* (L, LP, P, Pr) – laboratory activities, practical activities, project activities, speciality internship, with the same number of hours as in full-time learning. Except for the speciality internship, which usually takes place outside the higher education institution, these activities shall be organised face to face in the campus/online in synchronous mode (*with the department's approval*), per groups/sub-groups;
 - the course (teaching) classes of the full-time learning are compensated by *self-training activities* (AI) based on learning resources that are specific to DL.
- B.2. For PTL, the mandatory activities (S, L, LP, P, Pr) include the same number of hours as provided in the curricula for full-time learning, and are carried out throughout the semester in which they are scheduled. These can be scheduled periodically; however, scheduling them in a compact module before the exam sessions shall be avoided. The higher education contract shall specify that such activities are mandatory.
- B.3. In the case of PTL, seminars shall be conducted face to face in the university campus (SF) - at least 50% of the total hours allocated, and in tutoring format (AT), online in synchronous/asynchronous mode using information platforms. For seminars scheduled online in asynchronous format, the subject matter schedule shall mention the number of hours allocated for test papers and the time limit for submitting them.

- B.4. The PTL curriculum is structured according to the template presented in *Annex B1-IFR*. The number of hours of *self-learning activities* (AI) in the PTL curriculum is given by the number of hours of teaching (course) classes in the FTL curriculum.
- B.5. The number of credits assigned for the subject matters, and the form of final evaluation in PTL are the same as in the curriculum pertaining to the programme offered in FTL.

- B.6. The syllabi in the PTL curriculum are equivalent to those pertaining to full-time learning, and include the learning outcomes and how these will be evaluated, the contents of the educational activities and the required reading list (specifying the pages from which the learning resources will be used). The syllabus shall specify clearly the activities specific to the PTL form of education (AI, SF, ST, L, LP, P), with the pertaining number of hours, and the forms of evaluation (continuous and final) and their weight in the final grade.
- B.7. The syllabi shall be accompanied by the schedules of the mandatory educational activities pertaining to the subject matter, according to the template presented in *Annex B2-IFR*.
- B.8. At the time of the visit, the institution shall present the syllabi pertaining to that study programme in FTL, for the team to ascertain that the higher education institution ensures the same learning outcomes in FTL and PTL.

3.3.2.2 Documents presented by the higher education institution

- 1) The Guide on counselling students on taking the DL/PTL study programme.
 - 2) The curriculum approved for each cohort for the study programme accredited in full-time learning (the last 3 or 4 years, as applicable);
 - 3) The curriculum approved by the university Senate for each cohort of the DE/PTE study programme (according to *Annex A1-ID* and *Annex B1-IFR*, respectively);
 - 4) The syllabi of the subject matters included in the DL/PTL curriculum;
 - 5) The syllabi of the subject matters for the FTL form of education;
 - 6) The schedules of the subject matters, correlated with the timetable of activities per subject matters, per semesters (*Annex A2-ID* and *Annex B2-IFR*, respectively);
5. The regulation on the evaluation of learning outcomes in FTL, DL and PTL. The components of the formative and summative evaluations in face-to-face format and online in synchronous and asynchronous mode shall be indicated.

3.4 Specific infrastructure. Learning resources

3.4.1 Infrastructure

The material resources include education spaces, administrative spaces and individual or assisted training spaces, teaching laboratories, specialised units for the production of teaching materials, distribution and management of teaching materials and advertising materials, etc.

Information and communication technologies include the following components: computers and computer networks connected to the internet; virtual libraries; information platforms; video conference equipment and instruments; possibilities to access radio and TV channels; software packages; multimedia equipment; information systems for managing schooling; websites, etc.

3.4.1.1 Performance indicators

The material and IT logistics developed at institutional level (university, faculty, DL/PTL department/centre) specific to the evaluated study programme include:

- a) adequate spaces and equipment allocated to DL/PTL Departments/Centres for management, secretariat, financial-accounting department, department for the preparation and distribution of educational and advertising materials, etc.;
- b) adequate education spaces (rooms for seminars, projects, speciality laboratories);

- c) specialised equipment and software for the preparation of educational and advertising materials in multimedia and printed format;
- d) computer networks connected to the internet;
- e) audio-video equipment for presenting multimedia educational materials, access to video conference systems, etc.;
- f) specific education resources realised in DL technology, reference books, treaties and higher education courses necessary for individual training, study guides for students and tutors, advertising materials, etc.;
- g) information platforms configured for the evaluated study programme;
- h) tools to monitor and store the entire activity conducted via the information platforms used in the education process;
- i) information systems for the management of schooling;
- j) students have remote access through applications/platforms (also adapted for mobile devices), at least to information regarding curricula, their own school records and financial status.

3.4.1.2 Documents presented by the institution

- 1) A list of the administrative spaces used by the DL/PTL Departments/Centres (specifying the areas and the hardware and software equipment available, per functional categories), owned or rented, proved with documents (ownership papers, lease contracts, agreements, etc.).
- 2) A list of the education spaces allocated for the evaluated study programme (specifying the areas, the number of seats, and hardware/software equipment).
- 3) The schedule of educational activities scheduled face to face in the campus and online in synchronous mode in the current year, per semesters, for the evaluated DL/PTL study programme, including the history of the last 3 or 4 years, as applicable.

3.4.2 Financial resources

The higher education institution organising DL/PTL study programmes provides the finances for high quality educational services, at a level similar to that offered in full-time learning.

3.4.2.1 Performance indicators

- 1. The institution proves that it has sufficient financial resources, for the short term and for the future (at least for one study cycle), which it allocates in order to adequately complete its mission and objectives.
- 2. When approving and allocating financial resources, unplanned situations shall be kept in mind, at a level ensuring that any variation between the planned and the real financial resources shall not compromise academic standards and the students' interests. These will have to be protected even if the number of enrolled students does not match the number initially envisaged in the revenues and expenditure budget.
- 3. The higher education institution uses fair policies in establishing, collecting, and returning tuition fees in full or in part.
- 4. The tuition fee is the counter-value of all the services provided to the student by the higher education institution within the evaluated study programme. The tuition fee

includes a number of costs and expenses, quantified separately for each component of the study programme, as follows:

- a) enrolment costs;
 - b) cost of educational materials (materials for studying in DL technology, guides, task books, etc.);
 - c) the cost of purchasing software packages and other learning resources in analogue/digital format;
 - d) costs of using specific equipment required for carrying out the training process, including information platforms;
 - e) costs of using educational services provided by third parties, which are an integral part of the training process;
 - f) staff costs;
 - g) capital costs;
 - h) management expenses;
 - i) other costs.
5. The tuition fee is specified in the *higher education study contract* and may be updated annually.
6. The institution publishes the procedure related to returning the full or part of the tuition fees paid by the students in case they decide to cancel their enrolment. Fees shall be returned within no more than 30 days from registration of the enrolment cancellation application.
7. The criteria for the partial or full return of the tuition fees are an integral part of the *higher education study contract* signed by the institution and the student.

3.4.2.2 Documents presented by the institution

- 1) Draft budget and budget execution of the DL/PTL Department/Centre, and the university's decision for approving them;
- 2) Document regarding the average costs per student enrolled in the evaluated study programme, specifying values and percentage per each category of expenses;
- 3) Proof of approval of the tuition fee by the university Senate;
- 4) Bill of expenses substantiating the tuition fee.

3.4.3 Design of learning materials

In DL/PTL study programmes, learning materials are teaching, learning and evaluation instruments that need to substitute the role and the presence of the trainer in traditional training processes. These can be made, implemented and delivered to the students using various media:

- a) printed educational material;
- b) digital resources on information platforms;
- c) any types of adequate electronic storage/presentation media.

The self-learning course material for a subject matter may be designed as a learning material integrating various learning resources, according to the syllabus, and guiding the student in how to use them.

Learning materials for DL/PTL programmes are adapted for self-learning, and are fully produced using DL technology. These take into account the diverse content of the subject matters included in the curriculum. Learning materials in DL technology are not limited to narrative documents provided in printed or digital form, but include a level

interactivity that enables self-learning and self-evaluation for students, without the need for a trainer to be present.

Learning materials for a subject matter may include:

- 1) dedicated websites/webpages/platforms, integrated and managed within the education institution's infrastructure;
- 2) self-learning courses/seminars/practical works/laboratory works, recorded from online activities;
- 3) information/electronic tools for self-evaluation and progressive/gradual improvement of the students' performance/competences.

3.4.3.1 *Performance indicators*

1. *The self-learning course material* includes an introductory section concerning:
 - a) the objectives of the subject matter in terms of learning outcomes;
 - b) the content and structure of the course, per learning units/modules, and the supporting instruments;
 - c) additional resources;
 - d) evaluation methods and tools;
 - e) the number and format of test papers / continuous evaluation papers;
 - f) facilities for disabled persons;
 - g) description of how to use the supporting information tools specific to that subject matter (if applicable);
 - h) other specific DL/PTL tools developed/implemented by the university.
2. The content of the educational materials is divided into learning units/modules facilitating gradual, structured learning within a defined time unit.
3. To enable adequate management of the teaching process in DL technology, good correlation is provided between the subject matter objectives, the learning activities, the medium by which the course content is conveyed to the students, and the formative evaluation methods.
4. The objectives of the subject matter and of the learning units/modules are achieved irrespective of the medium used in teaching and learning: printed documents, information platforms, website/webpage, multimedia, etc.
5. Designing learning materials in DL technology takes into account:
 - a) the level of previous training of the students;
 - b) facilitating individual learning and developing learning skills and techniques;
 - c) ensuring high interactivity and feedback;
 - d) generating student-teacher and student-student interactions;
 - e) promoting active learning;
 - f) when teaching through synchronous or asynchronous online courses, these will be presented in modules not exceeding 20 minutes, followed by case studies and learning tasks that will engage the trainees in active learning. Through combining teaching elements and learning tasks and self-evaluation tests, the teacher motivates the trainees to participate in group or collaborative learning activities;
 - g) using a wide range of modes to facilitate and consolidate learning: illustrative examples, summaries, conclusions, etc.
 - h) depending on the specificity of the subject matters, integrating information /electronic tools for assisted learning/education and automated (self)evaluation;
 - i) structured monitoring of the elements of the learning pyramid: studying by reading, visualisation, listening, demonstration, exemplification, systematisation, self-evaluation, debate, application, and personal presentation.
6. Learning materials realised in DL technology include formative evaluation components.

7. Designing of learning materials in DL technology, implemented and delivered through information platforms, seeks to combine a wide range of components: text, graphic elements, multimedia, interactive applications, etc.

3.4.3.2 Documents and data presented by the institution

- 1) Learning materials developed in DL technology for all subject matters in year I in the case of provisional operation authorisations, and for the entire study cycle in the case of accreditations/periodic evaluations. (*According to Annex C1 - Coverage of the subject matters included in the curriculum by self-learning materials*);
- 2) Other educational materials and resources provided to students within the quantum of the tuition fee;
- 3) Web addresses of the information platform(s) and access data for a visitor account, to enable a full check of the use of these information platforms for the evaluated study programme.
- 4) Access to electronic archives of all activities developed/presented via information platforms.

3.5 Support for students, teaching staff, and auxiliary teaching staff

3.5.1 Differentiation in the delivery of the study programmes

Organising the education process in DL/PTL is subject to the availability of educational resources and materials designed and realised in a way that ensures efficient training through self-learning.

3.5.1.1 Performance indicators

1. All subject matters included in the curriculum are covered by educational resources and materials adapted to DL/PTL.
2. DL/PTL learning materials are presented in printed form, as digital resources on information platforms and other adequate electronic storage media.
3. Tutoring, conducted remotely via communication means and supplemented periodically by face-to-face sessions in the campus or online synchronous sessions, is an integral part of the training process for each subject matter in the curriculum.
4. Educational resources and materials developed in DL technology are realised homogeneously for the entire DL/PTL study programme. Distribution/accessing of such resources and materials is provided by the organising education institution for each student according to the *higher education study contract*.
5. For the subject matters requiring additional consultation of reference titles - academic courses, manuals, treaties, etc. - the organising institution provides all students with the necessary conditions to access such resources in classic/virtual libraries, as well as with access to scientific databases.
6. When educational resources and tutoring are sent/performed using internet-based technologies, students shall be provided with a guide of ethical norms related to using such technologies.
7. Record-keeping of the educational activities of students in DL/PTL is achieved through an integrated information system/other information platforms.

3.5.1.2 Documents presented by the institution

- 1) List of educational materials (manuals, seminar books, laboratory and design guides, websites/webpages, CD/DVD, online courses in the virtual library, etc.) realised for each subject matter in the curriculum (authors, year of publication, how they are accessed);
- 2) List of guides and information materials on how to use the various educational media and resources (computer networks, software packages, websites/webpages, internet, virtual library, computer-/mobile device-facilitated learning packages, etc.);
- 3) Summary description of how educational resources are distributed to/accessed by the students for each subject matter in the curriculum;
- 4) The guide of ethical norms related to the use of internet-based technologies for accessing educational resources provided through information platforms (included in the *Guide on counselling students on taking the DL/PTL study programme*).

3.5.2 Technical support

In order to ensure an effective distance education process, adequate educational resources are in place to enable self-learning and ensure communication between teachers and students, and between students and other students.

In the case of part-time learning, organisation of meetings between teachers and students, and the possibility to conduct some of the seminar activities in a tutoring system requires that resources adequate for individual learning are provided.

Information platforms are promoted and managed by the higher education institution through the DL/PTL Department/Centre/specialised departments. Such departments/centres provide:

- a) specific guides and training materials for training teaching staff on the technologies implemented on the information platforms, and to provide specialise training on using such technologies;
- b) training on using the specific tools for developing self-learning educational materials.

Information platforms include specific procedures and tools facilitating self-paced individual learning, using diverse, easily accessible means. For this, it is necessary to have:

- a) procedures implemented for the realisation of new courses on the information platforms;
- b) procedures implemented for updating courses and the related educational materials;
- c) specific tools for developing and implementing interactive course materials, adapted for individual learning.
- d) user (students, tutors) enrolment procedures implemented and functional;
- e) synchronous and asynchronous communication between students, subject matter coordinators, tutors, and auxiliary teaching staff ensured;
- f) tools in place for providing individual and group support to students;

- g) functionalities available for collecting user activity data and generating statistic reports in order to improve the services provided;
- h) tools for monitoring and storing the entire activity conducted via the platform;
- i) facilities provided - such as online help, learning medium maps, structure of the webpage on which the course is implemented, etc.;
- j) accessibility ensured to various learning and communication resources: online databases, news, correspondence, synchronous and asynchronous group discussions, online seminars and laboratory classes, virtual libraries, etc.;
- k) specific means offered for self-evaluation and evaluation of the knowledge and competences acquired by students;
- l) facilities available to periodically collect students' feedback on the educational services offered to them;
- m) monitoring and intervention procedures implemented for dealing with any technical issues.

Information platforms shall be implemented on internal or cloud communication infrastructures allowing for stable, simultaneous access of a number of users correlated with the number of enrolled students, and adequately managing various digital formats of educational resources.

3.5.2.1 Performance indicators

1. The higher education institution or, as applicable, the DL/PTL Department/Centre implements information platforms that meet the minimum requirements presented above.
2. The DL/PTL Department/Centre provides full technical support needed for the teaching, learning, and evaluation process.
3. Information platforms have facilities that allow for checking the participation of students and teaching staff: time of accessing online educational materials; participation in tutoring activities; records of control papers and tests throughout the semester; synchronous and asynchronous online communication between teachers and students; etc.
4. For any information platform used, full monitoring and storage of all activities conducted through the platform is ensured.
5. The education institution has a strategy in place for maintaining and updating specific hardware equipment and software products of the information platform, as well as other software/electronic systems used in the educational process.

3.5.2.2 Documents presented by the institution

- 1) Decision of the university Senate regarding the use of information platforms, adapted to the specificity of that institution;
- 2) Presentation of the level at which information platforms are implemented: department, faculty, university, network of universities;
- 3) Presentation of the status of implementation and the modality of promoting the information platforms in the academic environment;
- 4) Statistic data on the number of courses implemented on information platforms; the number of students using the online system; the number of teachers active on

the platform; communication within each subject matter; grades recorded; students' attendance of the assisted activities, etc. Such data shall distinctly refer to the evaluated study programme;

- 5) Recordings of the activities conducted via the information platforms. These shall be presented during the evaluation visit;
- 6) List of guides and learning materials that ensure training of the teaching staff on using the information platforms. These shall be presented during the evaluation visit.

3.5.3 Teaching support in the learning process

Student guidance and support services are a key component of DL technology, and make the core of remote educational activities. When designing them, pedagogic, technical, and material and human resource aspects that have a major impact on the teaching and learning process shall be considered.

In distance education, the students' educational activity is flexible in terms of the place, time, and pace, which is why support services shall take into account these particularities and, if possible, be available 24 x 7 throughout the academic year.

Students taking a DL/PTL study programme shall have access to learning resources and guidance and support services which are equivalent to those offered to students in full-time learning. These services include:

- a) clear, updated information on the support services offered by the institution and how to access them;
- b) access to administrative support services, both online and traditional;
- c) counselling on taking the study programme and selecting optional paths;
- d) electronic information support, which includes all the obligations and tasks that students have in relation to each subject matter in the curriculum (syllabi and subject matter schedules for each year of study);
- e) access to tutoring services for all the subject matters included in the curriculum;
- f) individualised support on going through the learning materials and carrying out the learning tasks, provided to students by the tutors, as well as efficient feedback regarding the performance of each student and their progress in achieving the learning outcomes;
- g) access to the resources of traditional/virtual libraries;
- h) opportunities offered to the students to present their opinions on how the educational and support activities are carried out for each subject matter.

3.5.3.1 Performance indicators

1. The students receive support from tutors, offered via various communication modalities provided to them by the higher education institution through information platforms, and through face-to-face meetings conducted in the campus, scheduled in the subject matter schedules or organised upon the students' request.
2. The tutoring system is sufficiently flexible to ensure counselling and guidance in a differentiated, customised manner for students. Communication between students and tutors takes place periodically through individualised or group message exchanges, using communication means that are accessible to all students.
3. The interaction between students and teachers who are in charge with the assisted face-to-face activities is planned by the education institution, and it is an integral part of the process of designing education materials.

4. The tutoring activities' planning process is based on clear, documented analysis of the content of remote and face-to-face support activities required for ensuring that students are fully successful in taking the study programme.

3.5.3.2 Documents presented by the institution

Description of the educational support provided throughout the DL/PTL educational process via information platforms;

3.5.4 Access to additional resources

Students are provided with additional educational resources, books, monographs, speciality literature reference, which:

- a) are clearly specified in the syllabi;
- b) have an adequate content according to the subject matter, are recent, and include clear specification of the parts recommended for studying;
- c) are available in the libraries of the education institution.

3.5.4.1 Performance indicators

1. The syllabi include recent educational resources in the recommended reading list, which are accessible in the libraries of the higher education institution. The syllabi are posted on the information platforms.
2. In addition to the recommended reading list, students may be provided with other types of educational resources (films, multimedia presentations, video tutorials, online demonstrations, etc.).

3.5.4.2 Documents presented by the institution

- 1) The list of educational resources provided for students in the form of mandatory and recommended reading lists, for all the subject matters included in the curriculum.
- 2) The list of alternative educational resources (films, multimedia presentations, video tutorials, online demonstrations, etc.) provided to students.

3.5.5 24 x 7 administrative support

The administrative support of the university is designed in close connection with the support services aimed for students in DL/PTL study programmes.

The main administrative support activities:

- a) provide future students with specific information on the organisation and delivery of DL/PTL activities, before they enrol in a DL/PTL study programme;
- b) manage the educational activities and all records regarding the students and their academic path using a continuously updated and secured information system;
- c) provide updated information on all the support services offered by the higher education institution and how to access them;
- d) provides the technical requirements and the requirements for organising the practical activities set forth in the DL/PTL curricula.

The administrative system is designed so that most administrative activities (enrolling in a study programme, paying tuition fees, accessing own data regarding schooling, creating timetables, etc.) are conducted online.

3.5.5.1 Performance indicators

1. The administrative support provides future students with specific information on the organisation and delivery of DL/PTL educational activities.
2. Administrative support ensures the management of the records concerning the students and their academic path.
3. The administrative support provides updated information on the services offered by the higher education institution and how to access them.
4. The administrative support provides the technical requirements and the requirements for organising the practical activities set forth in the curricula.

3.5.5.2 Documents presented by the institution

- 1) Document specifying clearly how students are informed about the organisation and delivery of the DL/PTL educational activities, the support services provided by the higher education institution, and how to access them.
- 2) Document presenting the information system used to monitor all records regarding the students and their academic path.

3.6 Evaluation of learning outcomes

The higher education institution provides adequate services for the evaluation of learning outcomes acquired by students in the education process. The evaluation and credit awarding process includes formative (continuous) and summative (final) evaluation procedures, specified in the syllabi and the subject matter schedules.

Designing the components of the system of evaluating the learning outcomes acquired by the students is an integral part of the process of designing the structure of educational materials in DL technology, and must be taken into account in the early phases of developing the curricula and syllabi.

Educational materials shall give the students the possibility to perform periodic self-evaluations in order to check their own progress in achieving the learning outcomes.

DL technologies provide opportunities to implement various forms of formative (continuous) evaluation and perform specific cycles to consolidate the acquired knowledge. Periodic self-evaluation tests with answers and comments shall be envisaged when designing the educational materials. Depending on the answer provided, the trainee may receive a recommendation to study some of the elements addressed in the course more deeply.

Interactivity and continuous evaluation are easier to implement when using information platforms; therefore, the educational materials include elements allowing easy access to self-evaluation tests and the possibility to provide answers automatically.

Feedback offered to students in the evaluations graded by tutors/professors and managed through information platforms play a key role in the educational process.

3.6.1 Performance indicators

1. The formative evaluation is conducted within the tutoring system, through self-evaluation tests and test papers, as well as within direct face-to-face meetings.
2. The evaluation procedures include clear specifications regarding the period when the subject matter tutor will send the student comments on the test papers and information on the grades acquired. The modality of applying these procedures in practice shall be audited periodically.

3. Checking, grading, discussing, and recording the results of formative evaluations can be done directly on information platforms.
4. Students are informed via the syllabi about the nature of the formative evaluations, their weight in the final grade, and the relation with the learning outcomes.
5. The summative evaluation process is the same as the process used for the same study programme delivered in full-time education.
6. The final evaluation is conducted in sessions scheduled every semester, through exams, colloquia or practical tests, which must take place in the presence of the subject matter coordinator and the tutor or the teaching staff who conducted the practical activities.
7. The examination period is written in the subject matter schedule.

3.6.2 Documents presented by the higher education institution

- 1) Information certifying compliance with the performance indicators related to evaluation is included in the *Higher education study contract*, the curricula, the subject matter syllabi and schedules, the educational materials in DL format;
- 2) Description of the strategy for implementing DL technology in the higher education institution.

3.7 Assuring quality of the teaching and administrative staff

3.7.1 Quality of the teaching staff

The universities organising DL/PTL study programmes employ adequate teaching staff according to the specificities of the study programme and the undertaken quality objectives.

The teaching staff involved in DL/PTL activities includes study programme coordinators, subject matter coordinators, and teaching staff leading seminars, practical or laboratory sessions, project activities, speciality internships, and auxiliary teaching staff.

Study programme coordinators and subject matter coordinators shall be tenured teachers at the universities organising DL/PTL study programmes.

Subject matter tutors are tenured or associate teaching staff who are specialists in the field and meet the legal requirements for employment.

Quotas for teaching activities specific to DL/PTL shall be established in lists of functions that are distinct from those for full-time learning, and are managed by the DL Department/Centre according to MECTS Order no. 6251/2012.

When drawing up the lists of functions for DL/PTL, specific activities shall be considered, such as:

- a) drawing up of educational materials - courses, self-learning and self-evaluation materials, exercise books, guides, laboratory papers, thematic books, etc.;
- b) face-to-face tutoring;
- c) tutoring conducted in information platforms;
- d) evaluation of reports, projects, test papers, and control papers;
- e) development and delivery of tests;
- f) final evaluation, etc.

The university shall have a methodology for drawing up lists of functions, including for DL/PTL activities.

3.7.2 Role of the teaching, auxiliary teaching and administrative staff

3.7.2.1 Study programme coordinator

The study programme coordinator works with the DL/PTL Department/Centre, and ensures correlation of all remote and face-to-face educational activities for all the subject matters included in the curriculum.

The tasks of the study programme coordinator are as follows:

- a) provides the methodological coordination of specific DL/PTL educational activities for all the subject matters included in the curriculum;
- b) provides support and guidance to all actors involved in carrying out the specific educational activities for each subject matter;
- c) integrates the educational aspects of the courses with the technical aspects related to their implementation;
- d) supervises the activity of the personnel providing technical and informational support;
- e) ensures and controls how learning materials are distributed;
- f) checks that quality management procedures are applied;
- g) summarises the results acquired by students in exams and colloquia, and presents these to the DL/PTL Department/Centre, to be further discussed by the faculty Council and the university Senate.

3.7.2.2 Subject matter coordinator

The subject matter coordinator is in charge with a wide range of activities, ranging from planning to feedback and evaluation:

- a) draws up the syllabus and the subject matter schedule;
- b) defines and implements the structure and sequence of remote and face-to-face educational activities;
- c) designs the self-learning course material, the learning tasks, the continuous and the final evaluations, and how the support materials are to be used;
- d) puts together and coordinates the team that develops learning materials in DL technology;
- e) answers the students' requests regarding the content of the course and the manner of delivering the entire educational process;
- f) draws up the topics for the exams and/or the test grids to be used for grading;
- g) ensures the delivery of the final evaluation, together with the subject matter tutors/the teaching staff leading seminars, practical works or laboratory works, project guidance works.

3.7.2.3 Teaching staff leading seminars, practical or laboratory activities, project guidance, speciality-related practical internships in PTL

The teaching staff leading seminars, practical or laboratory activities, project guidance, speciality-related practical internships in PTL is in charge of the same tasks as in full-time learning, while certain particularities apply for the PTL form of education, as follows:

- a) briefs the students on the learning activities that make use of DL technology;
- b) coordinates the students' individual or group activity, face-to-face or remotely;
- c) may participate in developing educational materials;
- d) helps students in drawing up individualised learning plans;
- e) answers the student's questions regarding the course content and how the course-related activities are delivered;
- f) offers feedback during the students' continuous evaluations;
- g) complies with the GDPR in the relationship with the students;
- h) monitors the students' activity within each subject matter;

- i) informs the subject matter coordinator of the students' requests;
- j) participates in the final evaluation of the students.

3.7.2.4 *Subject matter tutor in DL*

The subject matter tutor leads tutoring and assisted practical activities in DL. The tutor's role is focused on monitoring the students' progress, informing the students on the course of a subject matter, identifying the needs and problems of the students in taking that subject matter.

The role of the subject matter tutor is:

- a) to motivate students in the learning activity;
- b) to coordinate the students' individual or group activity, face-to-face and remotely;
- c) to participate in developing educational materials (optional);
- d) to help students in drawing up individualised learning plans;
- e) to answer the students' questions regarding the course content and how the course-related activities are delivered;
- f) to offer quick feedback during the students' continuous evaluations;
- g) to monitor the students' activity related to that subject matter;
- h) to inform the subject matter coordinator of the students' requests;
- i) to comply with the GDPR in the relationship with the students;
- j) to participate in the final evaluation of the students.

3.7.2.5 *Auxiliary and administrative teaching staff*

This staff category is in charge of the following:

- a) secretariat activities;
- b) management of material resources;
- c) ensuring enforcement of the provisions of the *Higher education study contract and Annexes / Annual study contracts*, including with respect to the tuition fee regime;
- d) monitoring the enforcement of the provisions of sponsorship and partnership contracts;
- e) ensuring an efficient system for collecting and dealing with students' notifications and requests;
- f) ensuring multiplication and dissemination of educational materials to the students;
- g) providing services specific to traditional/virtual libraries, etc.
- h) managing the infrastructure required for implementing the information platforms;
- i) providing technical support regarding the information platforms;
- j) informing all users of the structure and functionality of the information platforms;
- k) generating user access data for access on the information platforms;
- l) maintaining the data and personal information security system;
- m) ensuring logistic activities.

3.7.3 *Student-to-teaching staff ratio*

The teaching staff involved in DL/PTL study programmes may have their main employment quota at the organising higher education institution, or they may be associate professors, according to the laws in force.

The coverage of the activities in the curriculum with teaching staff is correlated with the schooling capacity proposed in the process of obtaining a provisional operation authorisation/accreditation/periodic evaluation, according to the specific standards for bachelor or master studies.

3.7.3.1 *Performance indicators*

1. Subject matter coordinators in the DL/PTL study programme are tenured or associate professors in the organising higher education institutions, and they meet the same

requirements as for full-time learning.

2. Teaching staff leading seminars, practical works, laboratory works, project guidance, speciality internships in PTL, respectively assisted practical activities in DL have the same responsibilities as in full-time learning, however with the specific particularities of DL/PTL activities.
3. Subject matter tutors are graduates of higher education: tenured or associate professors, specialists in the field, trained on specific DL technology.
4. The optimal student-teacher ratio is established so that it ensures the quality of teaching and learning, according to the specific standards in the bachelor/master study domain to which the evaluated study programme belongs.
5. The tutoring system is conducted per subject matters, groups or sub-groups that include a number of students in line with the specific standards.
6. The students' evaluation of the teaching staff involved in the DL/PTL study programme is a periodic activity, and the results of such evaluation reflect in the measures aimed at ensuring the continuous improvement of the education process quality.

3.7.3.2 Documents presented by the institution

- 1) Summary of the coverage of teachers per subject matters in the evaluated study programme (as per Annex C2);
- 2) List of teaching staff, per subject matters (as per Annex C3);
- 3) Number of places announced for competition (academic provision), and schooling capacity as approved by Government Decision, in the last five years (according to Annex C4.);
- 4) Statistics of students enrolled in the study programme, per years of study and forms of education, in the last five years (as per Annex C5);
- 5) Student-teacher ratio in the past five years;
- 6) Lists of auxiliary and administrative teaching staff;
- 7) Excerpt of the lists of functions of the DL/PTL Department/Centre in the last three years for the evaluated study programme;
- 8) Documents regarding student-centred learning environments.

3.7.4 Staff training

The staff involved in activities in DL/PTL forms of education shall periodically participate in training programmes on the specific technologies used in these forms of education.

3.7.4.1 Performance indicators

1. There is an annual training programme in place to train teachers and auxiliary teaching staff on specific DL technologies. The training programme must include activities, time limits, resources, responsibilities, means for evaluating the results, and lines for development.
2. Teachers who are beginners in DL/PTL forms of education are trained on the specific technologies used in these forms of education before starting the actual educational activities.

3.7.4.2 Documents presented by the institution

- 1) Coverage of the subject matters included in the curriculum by self-learning materials

(as per *Annex C1*);

- 2) Coverage of the subject matters included in the curriculum by teaching staff (as per *Annex C2*)
- 3) Report on the level of employment of the teaching staff involved in teaching activities within the evaluated study programme (as per *Annex C3*).
- 4) CVs of all teaching staff in the evaluated study programme, in Europass format, which must indicate their DL/PTL experience on the first page in the “*Professional experience*” column;
- 5) Description of the annual staff training programme related to training on specific DL technologies;
- 6) Evidence of the periodic training of the teaching staff involved in DL/PTL on specific DL technologies;
- 7) Proof of doctoral student status, as applicable.

3.8 Quality assurance of DL/PTL study programmes

The institution has a quality assurance system in place, with structures, strategies, policies and procedures regarding the management, assurance, and development of its own quality structure regarding the activities specific to DL/PTL forms of education.

The DL/PTL Department/Centre has specific quality assurance procedures in place to ensure the quality of DL/PTL study programmes.

DL/PTL Departments/Centres implement a quality management programme in order to keep the objectives of the DL/PTL programme adapted to the requirements of the accreditation criteria developed by ARACIS.

The quality assurance of DL/PTL study programmes includes:

- a) monitoring and evaluation of the activities related to developing, updating, validating, and approving the curriculum and syllabi;
- b) monitoring and evaluation of the activities related to developing, updating, and approving the educational materials realised in DL technology;
- c) periodic training and improvement of all teaching and administrative personnel involved in DL/PTL study programmes;
- d) performance monitoring and evaluation for all personnel involved in the DL/PTL study programmes;
- e) monitoring and evaluation of the educational process: teaching, learning and evaluation (of the learning environment), and communication.

3.8.1 Procedure for ensuring the equivalence of activities in the DL/PTL curriculum with the activities in FTL

Quality assurance aims to ensure the equivalence of the activities included in the DL/PTL curriculum with those in FTL.

3.8.1.1 Performance indicators

1. A procedure is in place for monitoring and ensuring the equivalence of the activities included in the curriculum and syllabi with the activities in FTL;

2. The procedure for monitoring and ensuring the equivalence of the activities included in the curriculum and syllabi is applied annually.

3.8.1.2 Documents presented by the institution

- 1) Procedure for monitoring and ensuring the equivalence of the activities included in the curriculum and syllabi;
- 2) Proof of applying the procedure for monitoring and ensuring the equivalence of the activities included in the curriculum and syllabi, for the evaluated study programme.

3.8.2 Procedure for the periodic updating of learning materials made in DL technology

Quality assurance seeks to evaluate the content of the student-centred study materials intended for the DL/PTL study programme, and the learning outcomes defined in the syllabi and implemented using DL technology.

3.8.2.1 Performance indicators

1. A procedure is in place for the monitoring and periodic updating of the educational materials made in DL technology, which requires developing and processing a questionnaire to collect the students' opinion on the educational materials made for each subject matter.

It is recommended that the questionnaire takes into account, but is not limited to analysing at least the following aspects at the level of the subject matter:

- a) *The self-learning course material is appealing and logically structured per learning units;*
 - b) *A good correlation is provided between theory and current practical aspects;*
 - c) *Learning materials stimulate critical thinking and gradual learning;*
 - d) *The learning units/modules cover the topics addressed in the (self)evaluation tests;*
 - e) *The content of the learning materials is appropriate for reaching the stated objectives;*
 - f) *Quantitative evaluation of the learning materials;*
 - g) *Qualitative evaluation of the learning materials.*
2. Implementation of the procedure for monitoring and periodic updating of learning materials made in DL technology.

3.8.2.2 Documents presented by the institution

- 1) Procedure for the monitoring and periodic updating of learning materials made in DL technology;
- 2) Proof of implementation of the procedure for monitoring and periodic updating of learning materials made in DL technology, for the evaluated study programme.

3.8.3 Procedure for the periodic training and improvement of all teaching and administrative personnel involved in DL/PTL study programmes

The higher education institution provides periodic training and improvement for all teaching and administrative staff involved in the DL/PTL study programmes. The purpose of the training and improvement for teaching, auxiliary teaching and administrative staff is to improve the quality of the educational process in all DL/PTL study programmes.

Training programmes for the staff involved in the DL/PTL education process focus on the following aspects:

- use of DL technology and tools required for developing learning materials specific for DL/PTL study programmes;
- knowledge and use of the information platforms available at the institution in implementing DL/PTL activities;
- awareness of the standards and procedures for quality assurance of DL/PTL study programmes.

The DL/PTL Department/Centre is in charge with planning, organising, and coordinating the periodic training and improvement programmes (annually, as a rule).

3.8.3.1 Performance indicators

1. Procedure in place for the periodic training and improvement of all teaching staff involved in DE/PTE study programmes;
2. Implementation of the procedure for the periodic improvement of all personnel involved in DE/PTE study programmes.

3.8.3.2 Documents presented by the institution

- 1) Procedure for the training and improvement of all teaching and administrative personnel involved in DL/PTL study programmes.
- 2) Schedule and thematic content of the training programmes organised by the DIDIFR/CIDIFR Department/Centre.
- 3) Evidence of the implementation of the procedure for the periodic training and improvement of all teaching and administrative personnel involved in DL/PTL study programmes.

3.8.4 Procedure for the periodic performance evaluation of all personnel involved in the DL/PTL study programme

The higher education institution shall ensure the monitoring and evaluation of all staff involved in delivering the study programme undergoing evaluation.

3.8.4.1 Performance indicators

- 4) Procedure in place for the monitoring and evaluation of all staff involved in DL/PTL study programmes;
- 5) Implementation of the procedure for the monitoring and evaluation of all personnel involved in DL/PTL study programmes.

3.8.4.2 Documents presented by the institution

- 1) The procedure for monitoring and evaluation of all personnel involved in DL/PTL study programmes requires creation of a questionnaire to identify the students' opinion on the quality of the activity of the teaching staff member who conducts practical activities.

It is recommended that the questionnaire takes into account, but is not limited to analysing at least the following aspects at the level of the teaching staff:

- a) *they are involved, and motivate the students to learn/make progress;*
- b) *they are well prepared professionally;*

- c) *they explain complex aspects so that everyone can understand;*
 - d) *they are open in communicating with students;*
 - e) *they stimulate students to participate in collaborative activities and present arguments;*
 - f) *they provide quick, specific answers to the students' questions;*
 - g) *they present the score of continuous evaluations timely.*
- 2) Proof of implementation of the procedure for the monitoring and evaluation of all personnel involved in the evaluated study programme.

3.8.5 Procedure for monitoring and evaluation of the education and communication process

Quality assurance seeks to monitor and evaluate the education (teaching, learning, and evaluation) and communication process in the DL/PTL form of education, based on the recorded data and statistic reports from the information platforms.

3.8.5.1 Performance indicators

1. Procedure in place for the monitoring and evaluation of the education and communication process specific to the DL/PTL study programmes;
2. Implementation of the procedure for the monitoring and evaluation of the education and communication process specific to the DL/PTL study programmes;
3. Evaluation of the education and communication process specific to the DL/PTL study programmes by the students;

It is recommended that the questionnaire takes into account, but is not limited to analysing at least the following aspects regarding the teaching, learning, evaluation and communication activities:

- a) *The study programme is fully covered with educational materials in DE technology;*
 - b) *Easiness of accessing the educational materials and other necessary information online;*
 - c) *Continuous learning of the students is encouraged;*
 - d) *Evaluation criteria are clear;*
 - e) *The evaluation system used truly measures the learning outcomes;*
 - f) *Friendly interface of the information platform(s);*
 - g) *Permanent interaction of the students with the teaching staff on the information platform is ensured;*
 - h) *Timely feedback to the students' requests and evaluations; etc.*
4. Monitoring of the participation of students and teaching staff in the activities conducted on information platforms.
 5. Monitoring and storage in full of all activities conducted via the information platforms (*at least 5 years*).
 6. DL/PTL Department/Centre's report on the analysis of the education and communication process.

3.8.5.2 Documents presented by the institution

- 1) Procedure for the monitoring and evaluation of the education and communication process specific to the DL/PTL study programmes;
- 2) Proof of implementation of the procedure for the monitoring and evaluation of the

education and communication process specific to the evaluated DL/PTL study programme;

- 3) Proof of evaluation of the education and communication process specific to the DL/PTL study programme by the students.
- 4) Presentation of the archives of recordings of all activities conducted via the information platforms.

3.9 Public information

Improving confidence in distance and part-time study programmes requires full, accurate information to be provided on the higher education institution, the educational provision, the status of the authorisation for provisional operation/accreditation/periodic evaluation, the services included in the tuition fee, the facilities offered by the institution, etc.

3.9.1 Performance indicators

The advertising materials for the study programmes accurately and fairly present the specific offer and the potential of the institution in the field of DL/PTL.

The materials by which the DL/PTL study programmes are advertised must include clear information regarding:

- a) the status in terms of the authorisation for provisional operation or the accreditation, as applicable, of the DL/PTL study programmes;
- b) the domain, the study programme, and the type of diploma acquired;
- c) the materials and services covered by the tuition fee.

The advertising materials shall highlight any information that may provide future and current beneficiaries of the education services a clear view on their career opportunities.

3.9.2 Documents presented by the higher education institution

- 1) Advertising materials for the evaluated DL/PTL study programme.
- 2) Addresses of the webpages that contain information for advertising the evaluated DL/PTL study programme.

4 Annexes

Annex A1 - ID. Template of Curriculum in the DL form of education

Annex A2 - ID. Template of Subject matter schedule in the DL form

of education **Annex B1 - IFR.** Template of Curriculum in the PTL

form of education **Annex B2 - IFR.** Template of Subject matter

schedule in the PTL form of education

Annex C1. Coverage of the subject matters included in the curriculum by self-learning materials

Annex C2. Coverage of the subject matters included in the curriculum by teaching staff

Annex C3. Report regarding teaching staff per subject matters

Annex C4. Number of places announced for competition (academic provision), and schooling capacity as approved by Government Decision, in the last 5 years

Annex C5. Summary of students enrolled in the study programme, per years of study and forms of education, in the last 5 years

Annex D1. Report on the level of employment of the teaching staff involved in teaching activities within the study programme

Annex D2. Number of students enrolled in the study programme.

University:
Faculty:
Bachelor/master domain:
Study programme:
Duration of studies:
Form of education: *DL*
Cohort:
Academic year:

ANNEX A1 - ID.

APPROVED,
RECTOR:

CURRICULUM

Year of study.....Semester.....

No.	Subject matter	Type of subject matter	Subject matter category	Type of activity No. of hours/ semester				Form of evaluation	No. of credits (ECTS)
				AI	AT	TC	AA		
1									
2									
3									
n									
Total hours, forms of evaluation, and number of credits									

Key:

Type of subject matter: *DF*- Fundamental subject matters, *DD*- Domain-related subject matter, *DS*- Speciality subject matter, *DC*- Complementary subject matter

Subject matter category: *DOb*- Compulsory subject matters; *DOp* -Optional subject matters, *DFc*- Elective subject matters

Type of activity: *AI*- self-learning activities, *AT* – tutoring activities, *TC* – control papers, *AA* – assisted activities,

Observations: *AT + TC* = number of seminar hours in the curriculum pertaining to full-time education;

AA = number of hours of laboratory works, practical works, project works, internships in the curriculum pertaining to full-time education

Form of evaluation: **E** – exam, **Clv** – colloquium, **V** –continuous verification

Dean,

Director of DIDIFR/CIDIFR,

Study programme:
 Year of study:
 Semester:
 Group:
 Subject matter:

ANNEX A2 - ID

SUBJECT MATTER SCHEDULE

Period	Week	Tutoring activities (AT)		Control papers (TC)		Assisted activities (AA)		Evaluations	
		Task	No. of hours	Range of topics	Time limit for submission / no. of hours	Activity	No. of hours	Date	Form (E/Clv/V)
Current training	1								
	2								
	3								
	4								
	5								
	6								
	7								
	8								
	9								
	10								
	11								
	12								
	13								
	14								
Exam session	1								
	2								
	3								
	4								

Key: AT – tutoring activities, TC – control papers, AA – assisted activities, E – exam, Clv – colloquium, V – continuous evaluation

Subject matter coordinator,

Subject matter tutor,

University:
Faculty:
Bachelor/master domain:
Study programme:
Duration of studies:
Form of education: PTL
Cohort:
Academic year:

ANNEX B1 - IFR

APPROVED,
RECTOR:

CURRICULUM

Year of study..... semester

No.	Subject matter	Type of subject matter	Subject matter category	Type of activity/ No. of hours/semester					Form of evaluation	No. of credits (ECTS)
				AI	SF	ST	L	P		
1										
2										
n										
Total hours, forms of evaluation, and number of credits per semester										

Key:

Type of subject matter: *DF- Fundamental subject matters, DD- Domain-related subject matter, DS- Speciality subject matter, DC- Complementary subject matter*

Subject matter category: *DOb- Compulsory subject matters; DOp -Optional subject matters, DFc- Elective subject matters*

Type of activity: *AI- self-learning activities; SF – face-to-face seminar; ST – tutoring seminar; L – laboratory works, practical works; P – project, internship;*

Form of final evaluation; *E – exam, Clv – colloquium, V –continuous verification*

Dean,

Director of DIDIFR/CIDIFR,

Study programme:
 Subject
 matter: Year
 of study:
 Group:
 Semester:

ANNEX B2-IFR

SUBJECT MATTER SCHEDULE

Period	Week	Face to face seminar (SF)		Tutoring seminar (ST)		Laboratory (L)		Project (P)		EVALUATION S	
		Range of topics addressed	No. of hours	Control papers	Time limit for submission / no. of hours	Laboratory work	No. of hours	Range of topics addressed	No. of hours	Date	Form (E/Clv/V)
Current training	1										
	2										
	3										
	4										
	5										
	6										
	7										
	8										
	9										
	10										
	11										
	12										
	13										
	14										
Exam session	1										
	2										
	3										
	4										

Key: **E** – exam, **Clv** – colloquium, **V** –continuous verification

Subject matter coordinator,

Practical activity teacher,

ANNEX C1

Study programme:

**Coverage of subject matters by self-learning materials in
academic year**

No.	Subject matter	Title of self-learning material	Full name of author(s)	Year of publication Publishing house, ISBN/with the approval of the department	Form of presentation/stora ge /manner of accessing
Semester I					
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
...					
Semester II					
1					
2					
3					
4					
...					
Semester n					
1					
2					
3					
4					
...					

Study programme coordinator/person in charge of study programme,

Study programme:

Coverage of the subject matters included in the curriculum by teaching staff in academic year ...

No.	Subject matter	Name, surname	Teaching rank	Role of the teaching staff member (subject matter coordinator / subject matter tutor / teaching staff member S/L/P)
Semester I				
1				
2				
3				
...				
Semester II				
1				
2				
3				
...				
Semester n				
1				
2				
3				
...				

Dean,

Study programme coordinator/person in charge of study programme,

ANNEX C3

Study programme:

**Report regarding teaching staff per
subject matters in academic year...**

No.	Name, surname *	Bachelor study domain / Doctoral study domain / habilitated	Subject matter (semester)	No. of study groups / formations
1				
2				
3				
...				

*Note: * In alphabetical order*

Study programme coordinator/person in charge of study programme,

Study programme:

Number of places announced for competition (academic provision), and schooling capacity as approved by Government Decision for the evaluated programme (DL/PTL) in the last 5 years

Academic year	Number of places announced for competition	Schooling capacity as set forth in the GD
20..-20..		
20..-20..		
20..-20..		
20..-20..		
20..-20..		

Dean,

Study programme:

Summary of students enrolled in the study programme, per years of study and forms of education, between 20...-20...

Academic year	Year of study								Total students	No. of graduates
	Year I		Year II		Year III		...			
	No. of students	No. of groups	No. of students	No. of groups	No. of students	No. of groups	No. of students	No. of groups		
Part-time education										
20..-20..										
20..-20..										
20..-20..										
20..-20..										
20..-20..										
Distance education										
20..-20..										
20..-20..										
20..-20..										
20..-20..										
20..-20..										

Dean,

ANNEX D1

Study programme:

APPROVE
D
Rector,

**Level of employment of teaching staff in academic
year/.....**

No.	Name and surname	Specialisation and scientific title	Higher education institution requesting evaluation						In other higher education institutions				Total positions / partial positions
			In the evaluated study programme			In other study programmes at the higher education institution			Name of higher education institution	Job name	Type of employment (NB/PO)	Number of positions (including partial)	
			Job name	Type of employment (NB/PO)	Number of positions (including partial)	Name of job / jobs	Type of employment (NB/PO)	Number of positions (including partial)					
<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>13=8+12</i>

Note: The summary shall be provided per departments, following the sequence of teaching ranks.

Key: NB- main quota, PO - payment by hour

Dean,

ANNEX D2.

APPROVED

Rector,

Study programme:

Number of students enrolled in the study programme, per forms of education, in academic year/.....

Academic year	Number of enrolled students per academic years and forms of education				Total enrolled students	Proposal for schooling capacity in year I, according to the number of teaching staff
	Full time learning (FTL)		Part-time learning (PTL)	Distance learning (DE)		
	Places covered by the state budget	Places covered by tuition fees				
0	1	2	3	4	5=1+2+3+4	6
I						
II						
III						
IV						
Additional years/Re-enrolments						
Total						

Dean,