

## Schedule of the external evaluation procedure

Step	Name, description and deadlines of the step	Deadline
<b>Step 1</b>	<p><b>1.1. Preliminary stages before initiating the external evaluation procedure</b></p> <p>The HEIs interested in external evaluation for the purpose of organising a joint programme shall file a written request with ARACIS.</p>	18 months before the date envisaged for the completion of the evaluation procedure.
	<p><b>1.2. Checking the eligibility of the proposed joint study programme</b></p> <p>The HEIs shall send ARACIS the required documents needed for checking the eligibility for applying the external evaluation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- decision on compliance with the requirements: no later than 60 days after receiving the documents;</li> <li>- communication of the decision: 15 days after passing the decision.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 2</b>	<p><b>Filing of the request for evaluation and initiation of the evaluation process</b></p> <p>The institution appointed to coordinate the external evaluation process shall file a <b>request for initiation</b> of the external quality evaluation process for accreditation/periodic evaluation of a joint programme with ARACIS.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- at least 9 months before expiry of the joint programme accreditation in the case of a periodic evaluation procedure;</li> <li>- within no more than 15 days after receiving the request for initiation of the evaluation procedure, the SRII shall send the appointed HEI the evaluation service contract and the invoice.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 3</b>	<p><b>Development and submission of the Internal Evaluation Report (IER)</b></p> <p>The internal evaluation report (IER) with its annexes shall be submitted to ARACIS in digital format via the ARACIS electronic evaluation platform.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- at least 3 months prior to the date scheduled for the on-site visit and no later than 45 days after submission of the request for evaluation.</li> <li>- within no more than 15 days, the institution shall be asked to remake or supplement the internal evaluation documents, if such documents do not match the requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 4</b>	<p><b>Establishing the membership of the Expert Evaluators' Panel</b></p> <p>ARACIS shall set up a panel of expert evaluators consisting of at least four members, including one student, originating from at least two of the countries of operation of the HEI member of the consortium involved in organising the joint</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- within no more than 1 month after initiation of the evaluation procedure.</li> </ul>



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<p>Step 5</p>	<p>programme.</p> <p><b>Analysis of the internal evaluation report (IER) and request for clarifications/additional information</b></p> <p>The IER with its annexes is provided to the members of the expert evaluators' panel by granting the panel access to the ARACIS evaluation platform.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- within no more than 7 days from receiving the IER or the additions to it, as applicable, the IER shall be made available for the members of the expert evaluator panel.</li> <li>- within no more than 30 days after the internal evaluation report is sent to the members of the expert evaluators' panel, the expert evaluators can ask for clarifications or additional information, if needed.</li> <li>- the coordinating higher education institution shall respond to such requests within no more than 15 days.</li> </ul>
<p>Step 6</p>	<p><b>Carrying out of the evaluation visit</b></p> <p>The on-site visit will allow the expert evaluators' panel to verify that the information contained in the IER matches the reality on site, and talk with the stakeholders in order to assess how the standards are met.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the location and schedule of the evaluation visit shall be established at least one month before the date of the visit.</li> </ul>
<p>Step 7</p>	<p><b>Developing the External Evaluation Report (EER), and assessments on how standards are met</b></p> <p>The expert evaluators' panel shall draft the External Evaluation Report (EER), which will include relevant evidence, analysis, and conclusions regarding the degree to which the standards established through the EA are met, as well as recommendations for improving future activities within the joint programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The EER shall be sent to ARACIS and to the HEI within no more than 45 days after completion of the on-site visit.</li> </ul>
<p>Step 8</p>	<p><b>Consultation with the HEI on the EER</b></p> <p>The coordinator of the expert evaluators' panel shall send the draft EER to the joint programme's contact person for feedback regarding any clerical errors.</p> <p>The expert evaluators' panel shall complete the EER and, if necessary, integrate any feedback received, and sends the EER to ARACIS within no more than 15 days after receiving feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no later than 15 days for a reply from the partner HEI;</li> <li>- no later than 15 days after receiving the answer, the EER shall be sent to ARACIS.</li> </ul>

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	from the HEI.	
Step 9	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Analysis in the Permanent Speciality Commission</b></p> <p>The technical secretary shall send the EER to the Permanent Speciality Commission(s) (PSC) pertaining to the study domain(s) to which the joint programme belongs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no later than 15 days for remaking the EER;</li> <li>- no later than 30 days from receiving the final version of the EER from the expert evaluators' panel.</li> </ul>
Step 10	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Analysis by the ARACIS Council and passing of the decision</b></p> <p>The ARACIS Council shall analyse the proposal of the PSC and pass a decision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no later than 30 days after receiving a request from the ARACIS Council.</li> <li>- no later than 45 days after the decision of the ARACIS Council to inform the partner HEI.</li> </ul>
Step 10	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Appeal/Complaint</b></p> <p>Appeals and complaints regarding the result of the evaluation or the way in which the evaluation procedure was implemented shall be settled according to the specific procedure described here: <a href="https://www.aracis.ro/en/procedure-appeals-and-complaints/">https://www.aracis.ro/en/procedure-appeals-and-complaints/</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no later than 15 days after receiving the decision communicating the result of the evaluation;</li> <li>- no later than 5 days after ascertaining the irregularity related to a breach of the ethics and professional conduct norms.</li> </ul>
Step 11	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Communicating the decision to the partner HEIs and the MoE</b></p> <p>The External Evaluation Report and the Decision of the ARACIS Council for the joint programme shall be published on the ARACIS website and in the DEQAR after the ARACIS Council adopts the final decision (and any appeals are settled, if applicable).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- no later than 45 days after approving the results of the evaluation.</li> </ul>



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Step 12	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Follow-up evaluation activities</b></p> <p>The external evaluation agency, together with the partner HEIs shall establish how follow-up activities will take place.</p>	