

The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education



External Evaluation Report (REE) for the procedure for obtaining a maintaining accreditation (MAC) of Doctoral Study Domain

Higher Education Institution/Education Provider Organization:	"ION IONESCU DE LA BRAD" IASI UNIVERSITY OF LIFE SCIENCES (IULS)
Doctoral School:	ȘTIINȚE INGINEREȘTI
Doctoral Domain:	HORTICULTURE
The objective of the external evaluation:	Maintaining accreditation (MAC)



Members of the ARACIS Evaluation Panel

No.	Last Name and First Name	Team role	Signature
1.	Cosmulescu Sina Niculina	Expert evaluator	
2.	Olah Judit	International Expert	
3.	Stănescu Vlad Andrei	PhD Student Evaluator	

I. Introduction

- the context in which the external evaluation report was drafted (the type of evaluation, the period covered by the evaluation, membership of the external quality experts' panel, etc.);

Type of evaluation: Maintaining accreditation (MAC)

Period covered by the evaluation: June 4-5, 2026

Membership of the external quality experts':

Nr. crt.	Numele și prenumele	Calitatea
1.	Prof.univ.dr. COSMULESCU Sina Niculina	Coordonator comisie
2	Prof. dr. OLAH Judith	Evaluator international conducator de doctorat
3	Stănescu Vlad Andrei	Student doctorand

- description of the higher education institution / Romanian Academy (establishment, evolution, mission, governance, structure, study programmes/domains, external quality evaluation procedures applied);

Establishment and evolution of IULS: The "Ion Ionescu de la Brad" Iași University of Life Sciences (IULS) has a long tradition in agronomic higher education, officially documented in the monograph History of Agronomic University Education in Iași 1912–2012. In 2021, the institution adopted its current name through Government Decision no. 540/2021. IULS is accredited by ARACIS to organize doctoral studies and operates through modern educational and research facilities located in Iași.

Assumed mission: IULS assumes a mission focused on advanced education and scientific research, aligned with European higher education principles and national educational strategies. The university promotes excellence in teaching, innovation, technology transfer, and lifelong learning, while supporting the professional and scientific development of students, researchers, and academic staff.

Governance: IULS functions as a public higher education institution based on university autonomy, academic freedom, transparency, quality assurance, and public responsibility. The university governance structure includes the Senate, Administrative Council, CSUD, doctoral schools, and faculty management bodies. Academic integrity and ethical conduct are ensured through dedicated regulations and the University Ethics Commission. Doctoral studies are coordinated by IOSUD-IULS and the Council for Doctoral Studies (CSUD), according to national legislation and institutional regulations.

Organisational structure: The organisational structure of IULS includes four faculties: Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Resources and Food Engineering, and Veterinary Medicine. The university also comprises departments, research centers, laboratories, doctoral schools, teaching stations, libraries, and continuing education structures. Doctoral studies are organized within two doctoral schools covering five accredited doctoral fields.

Fields and programmes of university studies: IULS offers comprehensive study programmes at bachelor's, master's, and doctoral levels, as well as postgraduate and lifelong learning programmes. Currently, the university organizes 16 bachelor's programmes, 24 master's programmes, and 42 doctoral specializations across multiple accredited fields. The institution also provides psycho-pedagogical training programmes through the Department for Teacher Training.

External quality evaluation procedures: IULS implements all procedures related to external quality assurance in accordance with Romanian legislation and ARACIS standards. The university regularly conducts institutional and programme evaluations based on internal regulations and quality assurance procedures. Following ARACIS evaluations in 2007, 2012, 2018, and 2023, IULS received the qualification "High Degree of Trust" and maintains accreditation for doctoral studies.

- general description of the doctoral study domain (why it was established - in the case of a provisional authorisation to operate; evolution and/or changes since the last external quality

evaluation procedure - in the case of procedures intended for accreditation or maintaining accreditation, as applicable).

The doctoral study domain HORTICULTURE has been operating within the Doctoral School of Engineering Sciences (SDSI) since its establishment and was officially authorized by ARACIS in 2016 through MENCS Order no. 5382/2016. Following the most recent external quality evaluation conducted in 2021, the ARACIS Council decided to maintain the accreditation of the doctoral domain, according to ARACIS Council Decision no. 98/25.11.2021, subsequently confirmed by the Ministry of Education.

Since the last external evaluation procedure, the doctoral domain has undergone several developments and adjustments aimed at ensuring compliance with the updated national legislative framework and improving the quality of doctoral education. Between 2021 and 2025, doctoral training in HORTICULTURE was organized in five specializations: Viticulture and Oenology, Vegetable Growing, Floriculture, Fruit Growing, and Plant Protection, under the supervision of eight doctoral supervisors. At the end of 2025, the activity of one doctoral supervisor ceased following his death.

The organization and implementation of doctoral studies have been continuously adapted in accordance with current legislation, including Law no. 199/2023, M.E. Order no. 3020/2024, and Government Decision no. 962/2024. In 2024, the mid-term progress evaluation report of the doctoral domain HORTICULTURE was submitted to ARACIS, presenting the progress made in implementing the recommendations formulated during the previous external evaluation procedure. According to ARACIS Council Decision no. 177/H/03.07.2025, the recommendations were considered partially implemented, with further assessment to be integrated into the next periodic evaluation procedure.

The mission of the doctoral domain HORTICULTURE is fully aligned with the institutional mission of the “Ion Ionescu de la Brad” Iași University of Life Sciences and focuses on advanced scientific research, innovation, technology transfer, and high-level professional training. The programme aims to develop highly qualified specialists capable of contributing to scientific research, academia, and the labour market in the field of horticulture and related disciplines. Doctoral studies lead to the award of the title of Doctor of Science, corresponding to Level 8 qualifications within the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

The main objectives pursued within the doctoral domain include increasing the quality and international visibility of doctoral studies, attracting high-performing doctoral candidates, promoting interdisciplinary and co-supervised doctoral research, strengthening national and international cooperation, encouraging participation in international mobility programmes, attracting extra-budgetary funding sources, integrating doctoral students into research projects, and ensuring a competitive, inclusive, and supportive research environment with equal opportunities for all doctoral students.

II. Methods used

- Analysed documents (internal evaluation report and its annexes; additional documents requested before and during the on-site visit, if any; other documents or data);

The evaluation process consisted of the analysis of the Internal Evaluation Report (REI) of the "Horticulture" doctoral study program and its annexes, as well as the documents requested during the on-site visit. The data and information available on the “Ion Ionescu de la Brad” Iași University of Life Sciences website, in electronic format, were also taken into account for a complete evaluation of the program's compliance with national and international standards.

- On-site visit (general list of visited locations and categories of persons with whom debates have been organised);

During the site visit, the main facilities used for teaching and research activities within the doctoral study program in HORTICULTURE were inspected. These included lecture and seminar rooms, teaching and research laboratories, as well as the university's practical training and research facilities. The locations visited included the USV Iași Teaching Station, the V. Adamachi Farm, the Institute of Research for Agriculture and Environment (ICAM), the Plant and Soil Analysis Laboratory, and the laboratories of the HORTICULTURE disciplines, which are equipped with modern research equipment, computing facilities, and specialized software.

Meetings and discussions were held with the following categories of stakeholders: the contact person and study program coordinator; the team responsible for preparing the Internal Evaluation Report (IER); representatives of the Quality Evaluation and Assurance Commission (CEAC) and quality management officers; directors and coordinators of research centers, institutes, and laboratories; doctoral supervisors; doctoral students; representatives of the University Ethics Commission; graduates of the doctoral program; as well as representatives of employers and partner organizations involved in research and practical training activities.

- Other relevant methods or aspects.

The evaluation included the verification of infrastructure and educational resources, as well as the assessment of the satisfaction level of doctoral students and graduates of the program. It also took into account academic management practices and collaboration with the professional environment

III. Judgement on the extent to which the standards and performance indicators are fulfilled

DOMAIN A. Institutional capacity

Criterion A.1. Managerial and administrative structures and processes involving students and other stakeholders

Standard S.A.1.1. Organisational components and institutional processes

The HEI has organisational components in its structure, which function based on adequate competences, responsibilities, processes, and implementation procedures, and ensure an effective management system.

Indicator I.P.A.1.1.1	For delivering the study programme/domain, the HEI has adequate organisational components and an adequate management system, which operate based on methodologies, regulations and procedures that are periodically reviewed as required by law.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

USV Iași is an institution authorized to organize doctoral university studies (IOSUD), carrying out its activities through the Doctoral School of Engineering Sciences (SDSI) and the Doctoral School of Veterinary Medicine (SDMV), under the coordination of the Council for Doctoral University Studies (CSUD). The doctoral field of Horticulture operates within SDSI, based on a management system governed by the University Charter, the IOSUD Regulations, the regulations of the doctoral schools, and specific procedures, which are periodically updated and publicly available (<https://iuls.ro/>; <https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the institutional documents indicates that the doctoral field of Horticulture benefits from appropriate organizational structures and management mechanisms for the effective delivery of doctoral programmes. The existence of clear regulations and procedures, together with the operation of governance structures in compliance with legal provisions, ensures an efficient and transparent institutional framework.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Standard S.A.1.2. Stakeholder engagement

The HEI proves that it engages the relevant stakeholders in developing methodologies and regulations, as well as implementation procedures.

Indicator I.P.A.1.2.1	The opinions of the faculty and department members, of the subsidiary or extension* and of other stakeholders are considered in the process of adopting and revising methodologies, regulations and implementation procedures.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

According to the institutional procedures of USV Iași, the development, review, and revision of regulations and procedures are carried out through consultation with academic and administrative structures, the university community, and other relevant stakeholders. Their involvement is demonstrated through the participation of representatives in governance bodies and university committees, through discussions held within CSUD and doctoral school meetings, as well as through reports, surveys, and Senate decisions (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the institutional documents and mechanisms demonstrates that IOSUD–USV Iași ensures the active involvement of relevant stakeholders in the decision-making process and in the development and revision of internal regulations, thereby contributing to the establishment of a participatory and transparent institutional framework.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
 - ✓ Recommendations
- The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion A.2. The material resources and optimisation of the use of the material resources

Standard S.A.2.1. Material resources	
The HEI owns adequate movable and immovable assets to enable it to carry out the study programme/domain.	
Indicator I.P.A.2.1.1	The HEI legally owns venues for the related education, research and administrative processes, as well as for services for students, doctoral students and trainees, thus providing an enabling environment for living and studying, including for disabled persons. Optimal venues are also provided for activities of the staff. Such venues are adequately equipped.

- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

IOSUD–USV Iași provides the doctoral field of Horticulture with an adequate material and financial basis for the organization and delivery of doctoral studies, in accordance with ARACIS standards. The infrastructure includes modern teaching and research facilities, laboratories and experimental fields, access to IT resources and scientific databases, a modern library, accommodation facilities, and student support services. In addition, doctoral activities benefit from financial resources supported through research grants, institutional development funding, and other funding sources. (<https://iuls.ro/cercetare/infrastructura-de-cercetare/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation indicates that IOSUD–USV Iași has adequate infrastructure, learning resources, and financial resources to support the teaching and research activities associated with the doctoral field of Horticulture. These resources contribute to ensuring an appropriate academic and research environment for the delivery of high-quality doctoral programmes.

* The faculty, department, subsidiary, extension - hereinafter "organisational components"

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Standard S.A.2.2. Management of material resources

The organisational components manage the movable and immovable assets used for the evaluated study programme/domain in an optimal, sustainable manner.

Indicator I.P.A.2.2.1	The movable and immovable assets are properly maintained to ensure optimal conditions for studying, living and research, as well as for work.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The material resources used within the doctoral study programme (PSUD) for the evaluated field are maintained and managed by the specialized structures of USV Iași, in accordance with the applicable institutional regulations and procedures. The university ensures appropriate conditions regarding maintenance, occupational health and safety, as well as accessibility of facilities and resources for persons with disabilities. Furthermore, beneficiaries' satisfaction with the material resources is periodically assessed through specific institutional procedures. (<https://iuls.ro/cercetare/infrastructura-de-cercetare/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis indicates that the material resources are properly managed and maintained, ensuring adequate conditions for the conduct of study, research, and academic support activities

Aspects that constitute best practice examples

- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion A.3. Adequate human resources and transparent staff recruiting procedures developed according to the law

Standard S.A.3.1. Human resources

The HEI has the required human resources to organise and deliver the evaluated study programme/domain.

Indicator I.P.A.3.1.1	The human resources of the organisational component are suitable to perform the activities pertaining to the evaluated study programme/domain. The teaching staff has the required qualifications and professional competences to teach the subject matters assigned to them in the job list.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The human resources associated with the doctoral field of Horticulture are organized and managed in accordance with legal provisions and institutional regulations. The doctoral school benefits from doctoral supervisors who meet the required performance and international visibility criteria, academic staff with expertise relevant to the Advanced University Studies Programme (PSUA), as well as supervisory and academic integrity committees established in compliance with the applicable regulations. The number of doctoral supervisors and supervised doctoral students complies with the relevant legal requirements (<https://iuls.ro/academic/scoala-doctorala-de-stiinte-ingineresti-sdsi/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that IOSUD-USV Iași has adequate human resources for the delivery of doctoral programmes in the field of Horticulture. The doctoral supervisors have relevant

scientific achievements and recognized academic experience, while the organization of teaching and supervisory activities complies with legal provisions and quality standards.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled

Indicator I.P.A.3.1.2	The HEI ensures professional and personal development for its staff.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

USV Iași promotes the continuous development of its human resources through institutional measures and policies dedicated to the professional and personal development of academic, research, and support staff. These include support for career advancement, the organization of promotion competitions and examinations, assistance in obtaining the habilitation certificate, funding for the publication of research results, support for academic mobility, and the implementation of continuous professional development programmes (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the institutional documents highlights the existence of coherent mechanisms and policies supporting the professional and personal development of human resources, contributing to the enhancement of competencies and the continuous improvement of the quality of academic and research activities.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Standard S.A.3.2. Recruitment procedures	
Teaching staff recruitment procedures compliant with the provisions of the law.	
Indicator I.P.A.3.2.1	Recruitment procedures comply with the provisions of the law, and are established and carried out transparently.

- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The academic staff and doctoral supervisors within the doctoral field of Horticulture are selected and carry out their activities in accordance with the applicable legal provisions and institutional regulations. The acquisition, recognition, maintenance, or withdrawal of doctoral supervisor status, as well as their rights and obligations, are governed by the specific methodologies and regulations of IOSUD and SDSI. Furthermore, clear mechanisms are in place regarding the evaluation, affiliation, and replacement of doctoral supervisors, in compliance with the applicable legal framework (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation indicates that the procedures for the recruitment, evaluation, and management of human resources within IOSUD-USV Iași are transparent and compliant with legal and institutional provisions, ensuring an appropriate framework for the conduct of doctoral activities.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion A.4. Digitalisation of institutional processes

Standard S.A.4.1. Digital transformation

The digital transformation process in the organisational component seeks to achieve administrative simplification and improve the quality of the services provided to the members of its own community, as well as to third parties.

Indicator I.P.A.4.1.1	The organisational component uses IT tools in its own procedures, to improve access and provide good quality services for the members of its own community and the indirect beneficiaries of education.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

USV Iași has a well-developed IT and communications infrastructure, managed by the Information and Communications Service, which effectively supports educational and administrative processes. The university uses integrated information systems for the management of academic and administrative activities, digital platforms for teaching and online learning, data security mechanisms, and dedicated applications for similarity checking of academic papers. Furthermore, the development of the digital infrastructure is supported through the Institutional Digitalization Strategy (<https://iuls.ro/universitate/documente/>, <https://iuls.ro/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis indicates that USV Iași employs a modern and functional digital infrastructure that contributes to the efficiency of educational, administrative, and research processes and ensures high-quality services for the beneficiaries of doctoral study programmes.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
 - ✓ Recommendations
- The indicator is: fulfilled.

DOMAIN B. Educational efficacy

Criterion B.1. Content and relevance of study programmes

Standard S.B.1.1. Content of study programme/s*

The study programme is based on a curriculum designed so that students can acquire the expected learning outcomes.

Indicator I.P.B.1.1.1	The study programme is developed and structured according to the expected learning outcomes, and organised based on transferable study credits. It includes all learning, teaching, practical training, research and evaluation experiences, which, together, lead to a higher education qualification.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The Doctoral Study Programme (DSP) in the field of Horticulture is organized and conducted in accordance with the applicable legislation and institutional regulations. It is structured around three components: the Advanced University Studies Programme (AUSP), the Scientific Research Programme (SRP), and a seminar programme. The curriculum is designed based on the intended learning outcomes and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). Teaching, research, and assessment activities are planned and implemented in alignment with the targeted professional and transferable

* The term “programmes” concerns the external quality evaluation for the study programmes contained in a master/doctoral domain. The term “programme” shall be used hereinafter.

competencies (https://iuls.ro/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/ORARUL-Sem-I-anul-univ.-2025_2026.pdf; https://iuls.ro/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Fisa-disciplinei_Dom_Horticultura.pdf; <https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that the doctoral study programme (PSUD) in the field of Horticulture is coherently structured and student-centred, integrating learning, research, and assessment activities aligned with the intended learning outcomes and the requirements of EQF/NQF Level 8. The organization of the programme based on ECTS credits and targeted competences supports the academic and professional development of doctoral students..

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
 - ✓ Recommendations
- The indicator is: fulfilled.**

Criterion B.2. Alignment of the curriculum with the qualification

Standard S.B.2.1. Alignment with the qualification level and the intended competences

In the curriculum design and development process, the organisational component seeks to ensure the qualification level, as well as correlation with the envisaged occupations.

Indicator I.P.B.2.1.2	The expected learning outcomes are correlated with the competences required by those occupations, according to the occupational standards and/or the European Skills, Competences and Occupations (ESCO).
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

Doctoral studies in the field of Horticulture are designed to meet the requirements of interdisciplinary training and to develop the professional and transferable competences necessary for successful integration into the labour market. The intended learning outcomes are formulated in terms of knowledge, skills, responsibility, and autonomy, and are aligned with occupational standards, the European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations classification (ESCO), and EQF/NQF Level 8 requirements (<https://iuls.ro/academic/scoala-doctorala-de-stiinte-ingineresti-sdsi/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that the intended learning outcomes are aligned with the competences required by occupations specific to the field of Horticulture and reflect the requirements of occupational standards and the labour market, thereby supporting the professional integration of graduates.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
 - ✓ Recommendations
- The indicator is: fulfilled.**

Criterion B.3. Student-centred learning, teaching and evaluation

Standard S.B.3.1 Principles

The organisational component implements the principles of student-centred learning.

Indicator I.P.B.3.1.1	The organisational component ensures implementation of the student-centred learning in the curriculum and through the teaching strategies used in the learning and teaching activities and experiences.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

Within IOSUD–USV Iași, doctoral students are regarded as partners in the educational process and benefit from rights and responsibilities that are clearly defined in institutional documents. The organization of doctoral studies aims to implement the principles of student-centred learning by ensuring a participatory environment, sustained interaction with doctoral supervisors, the use of modern teaching and assessment methods, and the involvement of doctoral students in decision-making processes and in shaping their own educational pathway (<https://iuls.ro/academic/scoala-doctorala-de-stiinte-ingineresti-sdsi/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation and institutional mechanisms demonstrates that IOSUD–USV Iași applies the principles of student-centred learning through adapted teaching and assessment strategies, continuous monitoring of academic progress, and the active involvement of doctoral students in the educational process and quality assurance activities.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Indicator I.P. B.3.1.2	The organisational component ensures opportunities for students to participate in academic mobility programmes organised in person and/or virtually.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

IOSUD–USV Iași implements institutional policies and measures to support the academic mobility of doctoral students and academic staff through international programmes, partnerships, and cooperation agreements. Mobility activities are supported by the Erasmus+ Office and the International Relations Service, while the mechanisms for selection, funding, and recognition of mobility periods are regulated at the institutional level. During the period 2021–2025, 42% of doctoral students in the field of Horticulture participated in various forms of international mobility. (<https://iuls.ro/academic/scoala-doctorala-de-stiinte-ingineresti-sdsi/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation highlights the existence of a well-developed institutional framework supporting academic mobility through international partnerships, dedicated funding mechanisms, and clear procedures for the recognition of outcomes achieved during mobility periods. The participation of doctoral students in mobility programmes demonstrates the effectiveness of the measures implemented and contributes to the internationalisation of doctoral studies. However, the available evidence also indicates opportunities for further development, particularly with regard to diversifying and expanding international partnerships, which could increase both the number and variety of mobility opportunities available to doctoral students. Furthermore, a more intensive and systematic promotion of mobility programmes among doctoral students and doctoral supervisors could contribute to higher participation rates and a more effective use of the opportunities already available.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

Increase the number of international partnerships to expand Erasmus+ mobility opportunities.

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Standard S.B.3.2. Fairness

The organisational component provides fair opportunities for students.

Indicator I.P.B.3.2.1	The organisational component provides fair opportunities for students, in line with their potential and aspirations, taking into account the diversity of learning styles and abilities
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

IOSUD-USV Iași and the Doctoral School of Engineering Sciences (SDSI) ensure the identification and development of the diverse learning styles and abilities of doctoral students through initial assessments, continuous monitoring of academic progress, and the adaptation of teaching methods and educational resources. Doctoral students benefit from support activities, counselling and career guidance services, social and educational services, inclusion measures for persons with special needs, and mechanisms designed to stimulate academic performance and participation in research activities and mobility programmes (<https://iuls.ro/academic/scoala-doctorala-de-stiinte-ingineresti-sdsi/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation highlights the existence of a flexible and inclusive educational framework, tailored to the individual needs of doctoral students, which supports academic progress, competence development, and professional integration through support measures and performance-enhancement mechanisms.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion B.4. Accessibility and efficiency of the resources and support services, adequate for learning

Standard S.B.4.1. Access to resources and services

The organisational component provides access to adequate resources and support services, according to the needs of the students.

Indicator I.P.B.4.1.1	The organisational component provides students, including those with special educational needs/disabilities, with access to resources and services designed to support the learning process, adequate for the individual learning needs, the study domain, the study cycle, and the form of organisation of the study programme.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

OSUD-USV Iași provides doctoral students in the field of Horticulture with permanent access to research infrastructure and to all material resources necessary for carrying out academic and research activities. Doctoral students benefit from access to laboratories, equipment, IT resources, the library, national and international databases, as well as support services, including accommodation and dining facilities. Furthermore, the university ensures the accessibility of facilities and resources for students with special educational needs or disabilities (<https://iuls.ro/cercetare/infrastructura-de-cercetare/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that IOSUD-USV Iași provides doctoral students with adequate material resources and infrastructure for carrying out study and research activities, ensuring equitable access and appropriate conditions for achieving the intended educational objectives..

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion B.5. Learning outcomes

Standard S.B.5.1. Definition and evaluation

Learning outcomes are adequately defined and evaluated.

Indicator I.P.B.5.1.1	Learning outcomes are adequately described, and they support understanding of the students' and teachers' expectations regarding the content of the subject matters in the curriculum.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

At the level of IOSUD-USV Iași, the intended learning outcomes are defined for each doctoral study field in correlation with the professional and transferable competences specific to EQF/EQF-LLL and NQF Level 8. These outcomes are formulated in terms of knowledge, skills, responsibility, and autonomy and are aligned with occupational standards and the European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations classification (ESCO). The learning outcomes are further specified at the course level within the Advanced University Studies Programme (PSUA) through the respective course syllabi (https://iuls.ro/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Fisa-disciplinei_Dom_Horticultura.pdf).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that the learning outcomes are clearly and coherently formulated, providing both students and academic staff with a transparent understanding of the educational objectives and the competences pursued within the doctoral programme.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
 - ✓ Recommendations
- The indicator is: fulfilled.**

Indicator I.P.B.5.1.2	Achievement of the learning outcomes is checked in ongoing examinations and study completion exams.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

Within IOSUD-USV Iași, the assessment of learning outcomes is carried out through continuous and summative evaluation methods, aligned with the intended learning outcomes and the targeted competences. Assessment throughout the doctoral study programme (PSUD) includes examinations, colloquia, projects, research reports, and other field-specific methods, while the final evaluation for the award of the doctoral degree is conducted through the assessment of the doctoral thesis and its public defence, in compliance with legal provisions and institutional standards. Furthermore, the assessment process is governed by internal methodologies and procedures that ensure transparency and objectivity in evaluation (https://iuls.ro/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Fisa-disciplinei_Dom_Horticultura.pdf; https://iuls.ro/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Analiza-rezultatelor-invatarii_Dom-Horticultura.pdf; <https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that the assessment of learning outcomes is carried out through a variety of appropriate methods that enable the evaluation of both academic progress and the competences acquired by doctoral students. The final evaluation of the doctoral thesis is conducted in a transparent manner and in compliance with legal provisions, ensuring the validation of the outcomes of the doctoral training process.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion B.7. Procedures and practices regarding the admission competition, the journey, recognition and equivalence of studies, and result certification

Standard S.B.7.1. Admission

The admission procedures and principles ensure access to higher education.

Indicator I.P.B.7.1.1	The organisational component applies the admission procedures.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

Admission to doctoral studies in the field of Horticulture within IOSUD–USV Iași is conducted in accordance with the applicable legislation and the institutional regulations approved by the University Senate. The admission process is organized on the basis of transparent criteria and procedures regarding eligibility requirements, candidate selection, publication of results, and the resolution of appeals. Furthermore, information concerning admission, available places, and participation requirements is publicly available and easily accessible to prospective candidates. During the period 2021–2025, a total of 50 doctoral students were enrolled in the field of Horticulture under various funding arrangements (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that IOSUD–USV Iași applies clear procedures for admission to doctoral studies that are fully compliant with legal provisions, ensuring transparency, objectivity, and equitable access to doctoral programmes.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Indicator I.P.B.7.1.2	Admission in higher education study programmes complies with the principles of fairness and equal opportunities, and with the establishing of support measures to ensure access of vulnerable groups at social and educational risk, including candidates with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

Admission to doctoral studies within IOSUD–USV Iași is conducted in accordance with the principles of equity, equal opportunities, and non-discrimination, ensuring equal access for all candidates who meet the legal admission requirements. The university implements support measures for groups at risk of exclusion or underrepresented groups and allocates dedicated places for certain special categories of candidates, in compliance with the applicable legislation (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that the admission process is organized in a fair and transparent manner, without discrimination, and includes specific measures to support access for vulnerable groups and to promote equal opportunities

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Standard S.B.7.2. Academic journey of students

The organisational component carries out actions supporting the students' academic journey.

Indicator I.P.B.7.2.1	The organisational component applies the regulations concerning the students' professional activity.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The academic activity of doctoral students within IOSUD-USV Iași is governed by the Regulation on Students' Academic Activity, approved by the University Senate and developed in accordance with the applicable legal provisions. The regulation includes provisions regarding the organization of teaching activities, admission, the conduct of the educational process, assessment, academic mobility, students' rights and obligations, rewards, sanctions, and the issuance of study documents. The activities within the Advanced University Studies Programme (PSUA) are carried out in accordance with the study contract and the timetable approved by the doctoral school (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that IOSUD-USV Iași applies a clear and coherent procedural framework governing the academic activity of doctoral students, ensuring that the educational process is carried out in accordance with legal and institutional provisions

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion B.8. Internationalisation process

Standard S.B.8.1. Internationalisation

Improving the quality of education and research through internationalisation actions.

Indicator I.P.B.8.1.1	The organisational component carries out international cooperation actions supporting mobility of the members of its own community and collaboration in academic and research activities.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

USV Iași implements institutional policies and measures to promote the internationalisation process, as outlined in the university's strategic and operational plans. Internationalisation activities are coordinated through specialized structures and supported by international partnership agreements, mobility programmes, and academic and research collaborations. During the period 2021–2025, both doctoral students and academic staff in the field of Horticulture participated in international mobility programmes and academic activities carried out in partnership with foreign institutions (<https://iuls.ro/academic/scoala-doctorala-de-stiinte-ingineresti-sdsi/>; <https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation highlights the existence of an active institutional internationalisation strategy that supports academic mobility and the development of international collaborations in education and research, thereby contributing to the enhancement of the visibility and quality of doctoral programmes..

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion B.9. Scientific research results

Standard S.B.9.1 Scientific research in the education process

Scientific research activities support students in achieving the learning outcomes.

Indicator I.P.B.9.1.1	Learning based on scientific investigation and research results support and are capitalised upon in achieving the learning outcomes envisaged through the study programme.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The research activities of doctoral students in the field of Horticulture are carried out within the Scientific Research Programme (PCS) and represent an essential component of doctoral training. Research topics are aligned with institutional priorities and the scientific area of the evaluated field and are reviewed and approved at the doctoral school level. Furthermore, doctoral students are involved in research projects and grants, while the research outcomes of academic staff are integrated into educational resources and incorporated into the teaching process (<https://iuls.ro/academic/scoala-doctorala-de-stiinte-ingineresti-sdsi/>; <https://iuls.ro/cercetare/proiecte-in-derulare/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that the research activity carried out within the doctoral field of Horticulture directly supports the learning process and the development of doctoral students' competences. Their involvement in research activities and the dissemination and utilization of scientific results contribute to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and the development of competences specific to doctoral-level education..

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Standard S.B.9.2. Scientific research pertaining to the objectives of the study programme

The organisational component carries out scientific research activities aligned with the objectives of the evaluated study programme.

Indicator I.P.B.9.2.1	The results of scientific research are visible at national and international level in that scientific domain, and capitalised upon in an adequate manner.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

Research activity in the field of Horticulture is aligned with the institution's strategic objectives and is carried out through research grants, research contracts, and specific scientific activities. Research outcomes are disseminated and valorised through the completion and public defence of doctoral theses, the publication of scientific articles and books, participation in scientific events, the preparation of reports, and the transfer of research results to the academic and professional environment. During the period 2021–2025, a total of 34 doctoral theses were successfully defended, while doctoral supervisors and doctoral students demonstrated significant scientific activity, reflected in their publications and participation in scientific events. (<https://iuls.ro/cercetare/rezultatele-cercetarii/>; <https://iuls.ro/academic/scoala-doctorala-de-stiinte-ingineresti-sdsi/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that research results are effectively disseminated and benefit from both national and international visibility through publications in scientific journals, participation in scientific events, and other forms of knowledge transfer. Research activities contribute directly to the development of doctoral students' competences and to the continuous improvement of the quality of the doctoral study programme. At the same time, the analysis highlights the opportunity to further strengthen

the international visibility and impact of research outputs by increasing the proportion of publications in highly recognized international journals relevant to the field and associated with established academic publishers.

Aspects that constitute best practice examples

✓ Recommendations

It is recommended to strengthen support measures and incentives aimed at increasing the publication of research results in prestigious international journals relevant to the field, indexed in recognized scientific databases and associated with established academic publishers, in order to enhance the visibility, scientific impact, and international recognition of the research activities carried out within the doctoral study programme

The indicator is: fulfilled.

DOMAIN C. Quality management

Criterion C.1. Quality assurance strategies and procedures, including in the field of academic ethics and conduct, which involve students, employers and other stakeholders and are applied in a consistent, transparent manner

Standard S.C.1.1. Application

Adequately implemented strategic directions, actions, and procedures

Indicator I.P.C.1.1.1	The organisational component consistently carries out actions and applies procedures, proving their impact on improving the quality of education at the level of the study programme
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✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

USV Iași has an internal quality assurance system based on institutional policies, strategies, regulations, and procedures approved by the University Senate, which are also applicable to the doctoral field of Horticulture. The quality assurance system includes dedicated structures and mechanisms for the evaluation of study programmes, the activity of doctoral supervisors, and the performance of doctoral students, in accordance with national and European standards. The results of these evaluations are consolidated in periodic reports and are used to identify measures for continuous improvement (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation highlights the existence of a functional and coherent internal quality assurance system, based on continuous evaluation and monitoring mechanisms. Its consistent implementation contributes to the improvement of educational and research processes and to maintaining compliance with the applicable quality standards.

✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples

✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Standard S.C.1.2. Stakeholder engagement

The HEI proves that it engages the stakeholders who have relevant activity in applying the procedures.

Indicator I.P.C.1.2.1	The opinions of the members of its own community and of other stakeholders are taken into account in the procedure implementation process.
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✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The implementation of regulations concerning quality assurance, academic ethics, and professional conduct at IOSUD-USV Iași is achieved through the involvement of all relevant stakeholders—academic

staff, students, doctoral students, and representatives of the socio-economic environment—in the institutional structures and processes dedicated to these areas. The monitoring and evaluation of educational and research processes are carried out continuously through feedback mechanisms, internal evaluations, and periodic quality assurance reports (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that the implementation of policies concerning quality assurance and academic ethics is carried out in a participatory and systematic manner, through the involvement of relevant stakeholders and the use of continuous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. These practices support the ongoing improvement of academic and institutional processes

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion C.2. Functionality of education quality assurance structures, including in the field of academic ethics and conduct, according to the law

Standard S.C.2.2. Operation

Quality assurance and academic ethics and conduct organisational structures adequately perform their specific role and functions.

Indicator I.P.C.2.2.2.	The academic ethics commission operates based on the regulation approved by the University Senate, and performs actions that are compliant with the law, independently from any other structure or person in the higher education institution.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

At USV Iași, the University Ethics Committee (UEC) operates in accordance with the applicable legal provisions and its own regulations approved by the University Senate. The UEC functions independently and is responsible for the prevention, analysis, and resolution of cases involving breaches of academic ethics and professional conduct, including those related to scientific research. Furthermore, institutional policies and measures are in place to prevent plagiarism, discrimination, and other forms of unethical behaviour (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that the structures responsible for ensuring academic ethics and quality assurance operate on the basis of clear regulations and actively participate in the monitoring and continuous improvement of institutional processes, thereby contributing to the maintenance of an academic environment founded on integrity, transparency, and responsibility.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion C.3. Procedures for the initiation, monitoring and periodic review of the study programmes and domains and of the performed activities, involving students, employers and other stakeholders

Standard S.C.3.1. Procedures and implementation of procedures

The HEI has procedures for initiating, monitoring, and periodically reviewing the study programmes and domains and the performed activities, and applies them systematically.

Indicator I.P.C.3.1.1	The organisational component consistently applies the procedures, and proves their impact on quality assurance.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The initiation, approval, monitoring, and periodic evaluation of doctoral study programmes at USV Iași are carried out in accordance with the applicable legislation and the institutional regulations approved by the University Senate. The periodic monitoring and internal evaluation of doctoral programmes are supported through specific quality assurance mechanisms, and the results are documented in internal evaluation reports, which serve as the basis for the formulation and implementation of continuous improvement measures (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that the doctoral study programmes within the evaluated field are managed through clear procedures governing their initiation, monitoring, and periodic evaluation. Their quality is systematically monitored through the institutional quality assurance structures, ensuring compliance with established standards and supporting continuous improvement.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Indicator I.P.C.3.1.2	Members of its own community and other stakeholders are involved in the procedure implementation process.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

Representatives of academic staff, doctoral students, and the socio-economic environment are involved in the design, approval, monitoring, and periodic evaluation of doctoral study programmes through their participation in the university's decision-making and consultative structures. Doctoral students and labour market representatives are actively involved in programme evaluation and monitoring processes, while the feedback collected from these stakeholders, together with the findings of periodic internal reviews, is used to formulate quality enhancement measures and support the continuous improvement of doctoral programmes.

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that the evaluation and development of doctoral study programmes are carried out through a participatory process involving all relevant stakeholders. The outcomes of these evaluations are effectively used in academic management to support the continuous improvement of programme quality and to ensure their ongoing relevance and effectiveness.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion C.4. Procedures for the periodic evaluation of the quality of the activities of teaching staff, auxiliary teaching staff, and administrative staff

Standard S.C.4.1. Procedures

Applying the methodologies and procedures contributes to improving the quality of the staff's activities.

Indicator I.P.C.4.1.1	The organisational component analyses the results of the students' biannual evaluation of teachers.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The evaluation of academic and research staff within IOSUD-USV Iași is conducted periodically, in accordance with the applicable legislation and the institutional procedures approved by the University Senate. The process includes self-evaluation, peer evaluation, managerial evaluation, and student evaluation, based on criteria related to teaching activity, research performance, professional reputation, and involvement in the academic community. Furthermore, doctoral supervisors are periodically assessed with regard to their scientific performance and supervisory activity, in relation to the standards established by CNATDCU. During the period under review, all academic staff received the rating "Very Good", and all doctoral supervisors met the applicable minimum national standards. (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates the existence of a structured and functional system for the evaluation of academic staff and doctoral supervisors, based on multi-criteria assessment and continuous feedback mechanisms. The results of these evaluations are used to formulate and implement measures aimed at improving the quality of the educational process and research activities

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
 - ✓ Recommendations
- The indicator is: fulfilled.**

Criterion C.5. Systematically updated databases on internal quality assurance

Standard S.C.5.1. Databases

The HEI uses databases to support internal quality assurance activities.

Indicator I.P.C.5.1.1	The organisational component systematically collects and analyses data required for the internal quality assurance process.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

USV Iași uses the integrated ACADEMIS information system for the management and monitoring of academic, administrative, and financial databases through dedicated modules covering student administration, research, human resources, and institutional management activities. The Quality Assurance Department (QAD), under the coordination of the responsible institutional structures, systematically collects, archives, and analyses relevant information related to quality evaluation and assurance derived from academic and administrative activities. The results of these analyses are consolidated in periodic reports and used to support evaluation processes and institutional development initiatives (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates the existence of an integrated and functional system for the collection, management, and analysis of data relevant to quality assurance. The information collected is systematically used to monitor activities and to implement continuous improvement measures aimed at enhancing educational and institutional processes.

- Aspects that constitute best practice examples
 - ✓ Recommendations
- The indicator is: fulfilled.**

Criterion C.6. Transparency of information of public interest, including those regarding the study programmes and domains offered, and transparency regarding the related certificates, diplomas and qualifications

Standard S.C.6.1. Transparency

The organisational component ensures transparency of information, as required by the law.

Indicator I.P.C.6.1.1	The organisational component ensures publication and access to information of public interest regarding the evaluated study programme.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

IOSUD-USV Iași ensures transparency in the organization and delivery of doctoral study programmes by publishing on its institutional website all relevant information regarding regulations, methodologies, specific procedures, admission, study programmes, funding, doctoral supervisors, research activities, doctoral thesis defences, evaluation standards, and educational resources. Furthermore, the university publishes annual self-evaluation reports and information concerning doctoral students' feedback on the quality of the educational process. (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that USV Iași ensures public and transparent access to relevant information regarding the organization and delivery of doctoral programmes, thereby contributing to the effective information of all stakeholders and to the observance of the principles of institutional transparency.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Indicator I.P.C.6.1.2	The organisational component ensures transparent decision-making processes.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

USV Iași ensures the transparency of its institutional decisions and activities in accordance with the provisions of the University Charter and the applicable legislation by publishing on its website relevant information regarding study programmes, academic and research staff, facilities available to students, decisions of the governing bodies, reports and financial documents, as well as other information of public interest (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>; <https://iuls.ro/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled

The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that the process of communication and dissemination of information is carried out in a transparent manner, both at the institutional level and within the doctoral school, ensuring that stakeholders have access to up-to-date and relevant information.

- ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
- ✓ Recommendations

The indicator is: fulfilled.

Criterion C.8. Participation in external evaluation processes, according to the law

Standard S.C.8.1. Compliance with the external evaluation obligation

The HEI undergoes external quality evaluation as required by the law.

Indicator I.P.C.8.1.1	The organisational component carries out the procedures pertaining to the external quality evaluation process, aiming to organise the evaluated study programme as provided by the law.
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- ✓ Presentation of the state of facts, supported by documents and data (documents preferably included through links in the body of the IER)

The external evaluation of IOSUD–USV Iași and its doctoral study fields is carried out in accordance with the applicable legislation and ARACIS standards. The doctoral field of Horticulture operates within the Doctoral School of Engineering Sciences and holds ARACIS accreditation, which has been maintained following periodic external evaluations. Furthermore, the results of the most recent external progress evaluation indicate that a substantial proportion of the previously formulated recommendations have been implemented and that significant progress has been achieved in terms of educational quality, research performance, and internationalisation (<https://iuls.ro/academic/studii-universitare-de-doctorat/>).

- ✓ Analysis of the state of facts, in relation with the state of facts acknowledged from documents and considering the analysed performance indicator, to justify judgement on the extent to which the indicator was fulfilled
 - ✓ The analysis of the documentation demonstrates that IOSUD–USV Iași complies with the legal requirements and quality standards governing external quality assurance evaluations through a rigorous and transparent process of planning, monitoring, and implementing continuous improvement measures
 - ✓ Aspects that constitute best practice examples
 - ✓ Recommendations
- The indicator is: fulfilled.

IV. SWOT Analysis

Strengths: ✓ PhD supervisors with international visibility and relevant scientific activity, who meet national qualification standards; ✓ Doctoral programs structured in accordance with the professional and transversal skills pursued; ✓ Modern research infrastructure and properly equipped laboratories for teaching and scientific activities; ✓ Scientific research is a central component of the doctoral program and benefits from adequate resources; ✓ The active involvement of doctoral students in the academic and decision-making processes of the university.	INTERNAL FACTORS ⬆	Weaknesses: ✓ Underdeveloped international student services constrain the programme's global reach and visibility; ✓ Relatively small number of doctoral students applying for external mobility; ✓ Increasing underfunding of research activities; ✓ The difficulty of recruiting human resources for teaching and research, due to socio-economic constraints.
SWOT analysis		
Opportunities: ✓ Alignment of doctoral programs with the requirements and good practices of similar programs in the European Higher Education Area; ✓ Accessing European and structural funds for the development of infrastructure, research and strategic projects; ✓ The existence of a legislative framework favorable to the development of doctoral studies and	EXTERNAL FACTORS ⬆	Threats: ✓ Increasing competition from higher education institutions in the country and in the European Space; ✓ The decrease in the number of potential candidates, against the backdrop of demographic decline and the aging of the population; ✓ Low interest of the economic environment for the development of strategic partnerships with higher education institutions;

- research activities; ✓ Development of international partnerships and collaborations with the socio-economic and business environment; ✓ Access to modern information technologies and international training and research resources; ✓ The possibility of expanding collaborations with international research centers and networks; ✓ Mobility and funding opportunities for students through European programs and inter-university agreements.		✓ Economic difficulties that can influence the continuation of studies and can determine the orientation of students towards the labor market; ✓ The insufficient level of funding of higher education and research activities.
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V. Extent to which the standards and performance indicators are fulfilled, and recommendations

No.	Performance Indicator	Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF)	Recommendations
DOMAIN A. Institutional capacity			
1.	I.P.A.1.1.1 For delivering the study programme/domain, the HEI has adequate organisational components and an adequate management system, which operate based on methodologies, regulations and procedures that are periodically reviewed as required by law.	F	
2.	I.P.A.1.2.1 The opinions of the faculty and department members, of the subsidiary or extension and of other stakeholders are considered in the process of adopting and revising methodologies, regulations and implementation procedures.	F	
3.	I.P.A.2.1.1 The HEI legally owns venues for the related education, research and administrative processes, as well as for services for students, doctoral students and trainees, thus providing an enabling environment for living and studying, including for disabled persons. Optimal venues are also provided for activities of the staff. Such venues are adequately equipped.	F	
4.	I.P.A.2.2.1 The movable and immovable assets are properly maintained to ensure optimal conditions for studying, living and research, as well as for work.	F	
5.	I.P.A.3.1.1 The human resources of the organisational component are suitable to perform the activities pertaining to the evaluated study programme/domain. The teaching staff has the required qualifications	F	

No.	Performance Indicator	Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF)	Recommendations
	and professional competences to teach the subject matters assigned to them in the job list.		
6.	I.P.A.3.1.2 The HEI ensures professional and personal development for its staff.	F	
7.	I.P.A.3.2.1 Recruitment procedures comply with the provisions of the law, and are established and carried out transparently.	F	
8.	I.P.A.4.1.1 The organisational component uses IT tools in its own procedures, to improve access and provide good quality services for the members of its own community and the indirect beneficiaries of education.	F	
DOMAIN B. Educational efficacy			
9.	I.P.B.1.1.1 The study programme is developed and structured according to the expected learning outcomes, and organised based on transferable study credits. It includes all learning, teaching, practical training, research and evaluation experiences, which, together, lead to a higher education qualification.	F	
10.	I.P.B.2.1.2 The expected learning outcomes are correlated with the competences required by those occupations, according to the occupational standards and/or the European Skills, Competences and Occupations (ESCO).	F	
11.	I.P.B.3.1.1 The organisational component ensures implementation of the student-centred learning in the curriculum and through the teaching strategies used in the learning and teaching activities and experiences.	F	
12.	I.P.B.3.1.2 The organisational component ensures opportunities for students to participate in academic mobility programmes organised in person and/or virtually.	F	Increase the number of international partnerships to expand Erasmus+ mobility opportunities
13.	I.P.B.3.2.1 The organisational component provides fair opportunities for students, in line with their potential and aspirations, taking into account the diversity of learning styles and abilities.	F	
14.	I.P.B.4.1.1 The organisational component provides students, including those with special educational needs/disabilities, with access to resources and services designed to support the learning process, adequate for the individual learning needs, the study domain, the study cycle, and the form of organisation of the study programme.	F	

No.	Performance Indicator	Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF)	Recommendations
15.	I.P.B.5.1.1 Learning outcomes are adequately described, and they support understanding of the students' and teachers' expectations regarding the content of the subject matters in the curriculum.	F	
16.	I.P.B.5.1.2 Achievement of the learning outcomes is checked in ongoing examinations and study completion exams.	F	
17.	I.P.B.7.1.1 The organisational component applies the admission procedures.	F	
18.	I.P.B.7.1.2 Admission in higher education study programmes complies with the principles of fairness and equal opportunities, and with the establishing of support measures to ensure access of vulnerable groups at social and educational risk, including candidates with special educational needs and/or disabilities.	F	
19.	I.P.B.7.2.1 The organisational component applies the regulations concerning the students' professional activity.	F	
20.	I.P.B.8.1.1 The organisational component carries out international cooperation actions supporting mobility of the members of its own community and collaboration in academic and research activities.	F	
21.	I.P.B.9.1.1 Learning based on scientific investigation and research results support and are capitalised upon in achieving the learning outcomes envisaged through the study programme.	F	
22.	I.P.B.9.2.1 The results of scientific research are visible at national and international level in that scientific domain, and capitalised upon in an adequate manner.	F	It is recommended to strengthen support measures and incentives aimed at increasing the publication of research results in prestigious international journals relevant to the field, indexed in recognized scientific databases and associated with established academic publishers, in order to enhance the visibility, scientific impact, and international recognition of the research activities carried out within the doctoral study programme
DOMAIN C. Quality management			
23.	I.P.C.1.1.1 The organisational component consistently applies the procedures, and proves their impact on quality assurance.	F	
24.	I.P.C.1.2.1 The opinions of the members of its own community and of other stakeholders are taken into account in the procedure implementation process.	F	

No.	Performance Indicator	Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF)	Recommendations
25.	I.P.C.2.2.2. The academic ethics commission operates based on the regulation approved by the University Senate, and performs actions that are compliant with the law, independently from any other structure or person in the higher education institution.	F	
26.	I.P.C.3.1.1 The organisational component consistently applies the procedures, and proves their impact on quality assurance.	F	
27.	I.P.C.3.1.2 Members of its own community and other stakeholders are involved in the procedure implementation process.	F	
28.	I.P.C.4.1.1 The organisational component analyses the results of the students' biannual evaluation of teachers.	F	
29.	I.P.C.5.1.1 The organisational component systematically collects and analyses data required for the internal quality assurance process.	F	
30.	I.P.C.6.1.1 The organisational component ensures publication and access to information of public interest regarding the evaluated study programme.	F	
31.	I.P.C.6.1.2 The organisational component ensures transparent decision-making processes.	F	
32.	I.P.C.8.1.1 The organisational component carries out the procedures pertaining to the external quality evaluation process, aiming to organise the evaluated study programme as provided by the law.	F	

Summary Table of Performance Indicators – Degree of Fulfillment

Evaluation Domain	Number of Performance Indicators		
	Fulfilled	Partially fulfilled	Unfulfilled
Domain A. Institutional capacity	8		
Domain B. Educational efficacy	14		
Domain C. Quality management	10		
Total	32		

32 performance indicators were evaluated, and all of them were fulfilled.

VI. Conclusions

The doctoral program in Horticulture provides high-quality education, rigorously organized in accordance with ARACIS standards, with an appropriate curriculum, qualified human resources, and adequate infrastructure, efficient managerial processes, and the involvement of quality assurance structures. The academic staff are active in research and academic life, and doctoral students are involved in scientific



activities. The program ensures solid academic training, compatible with the European Higher Education Area and labor market requirements, supported by a commitment to continuous improvement

Following the completion of the accreditation/maintaining accreditation procedure, the decision of the evaluation panel shall be one of the following:*

- a) **maintaining accreditation** (MAC);

VII. Annexes

1. The schedule of the evaluation visit to ÎS;
2. The minutes of all meetings organized during the visit to ÎS;
3. Resources available on the university's and/or faculty's website.

* When the external quality evaluation for accreditation is performed with undergoing the procedure for obtaining a provisional authorisation to operate.