



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

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|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Higher Education Institution/Education Provider Organization: | "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava |
| Doctoral School:                                              | Applied and Engineering Sciences        |
| Doctoral Domain:                                              | Food Engineering                        |
| 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.  | RIVIȘ ADRIAN             | Expert evaluator      |           |
| 2.  | COZ FERNANDEZ ALBERTO    | International Expert  |           |
| 3.  | STĂNESCU VLAD ANDREI     | PhD Student Evaluator |           |

## I. Introduction

This external evaluation report was prepared in the context of the procedure for maintaining the accreditation of the field of study Food Engineering, organized by IOSUD - "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava, within the Doctoral School of Applied and Engineering Sciences. The evaluation covers the period 2021-2025 and is based on the internal evaluation report submitted by the institution, its supporting documents and annexes, as well as the external evaluation visit carried out during May 28-29, 2026. The ARACIS evaluation committee was composed of Prof. Dr. Eng. Adrian Riviș, expert evaluator and committee president, Prof. Dr. Alberto Fernandez Coz, international expert evaluator, and Vlad Andrei Stănescu, doctoral student evaluator.

The doctoral field of study **Food Engineering (DSUD IPA)** was established in 2015 within "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava, in the context of the continuous development of the food industry at regional and national levels and the need to strengthen advanced research in this area. The establishment of the field aimed to train highly qualified specialists capable of contributing to scientific progress, technological innovation, and increased competitiveness of the food sector.

The motivation for creating this field was determined by the high share of the food industry in the economy of the North-East region, the presence of a significant number of economic operators active in the sector, and the need for a doctoral framework to support applied research and the transfer of knowledge to the socio-economic environment. The field was designed as an instrument to support the sustainable development of the food sector by addressing research topics focused on food safety, product quality, valorisation of local resources, and optimisation of technological processes.

## II. Methods used

The external evaluation was based on the analysis of the internal evaluation report prepared by IOSUD-USv for the doctoral study field of Food Engineering, together with the annexes. The evaluation committee also analyzed the documents and public information available on the USv and IOSUD-USv websites, including regulations, methodologies, operational procedures, CSUD documents, information about the doctoral school, information about admission, quality assurance documents, ethics documents, information about doctoral supervisors, doctoral theses, research infrastructure and other public information relevant to the evaluated field.

The evaluation also included the external evaluation visit carried out at the "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava during May 28-29, 2026. During the visit, the commission held technical discussions within the evaluation team and meetings with representatives of the management of the organizational component, the team that developed the internal evaluation report, representatives of the quality assurance structures, doctoral supervisors and teaching staff involved in the doctoral field, doctoral students, graduates, employers, staff responsible for research centers and laboratories. The visit also included the material base and research infrastructure used by the IPA doctoral field.

The evaluation was carried out by correlating the information provided in the internal evaluation report, the annexes and public institutional documents and the clarifications obtained during the visit. Particular attention was paid to the correspondence between documentary evidence and the actual functioning of the doctoral field, including the organization of doctoral studies, human and material resources, research infrastructure, doctoral student experience, quality assurance mechanisms, ethics and academic integrity

procedures, stakeholder involvement, internationalization and implementation of previous ARACIS recommendations.

### 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.

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| <b>Indicator</b><br>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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The activity of the USV, specific to a higher education institution, is carried out through organizational components and a management system.

The functioning of the institution is based on methodologies, regulations and procedures that are periodically revised and that govern teaching, research and administrative activities. These documents are periodically revised to align with the current legislative framework and the realities of the educational field. They are applied in all the activities they regulate, in order to ensure a favorable environment for the implementation of educational, scientific and managerial policies. From a prospective perspective, the implementation of the requirements established in the methodologies, regulations and procedures requires monitoring to ensure optimal conditions for teaching, research and administrative activities, allowing students to be prepared for the dynamic demands of the labor market (IER p.11).

The Commission found that the documents are periodically reviewed to ensure alignment with the current legislative framework and the realities of the educational field. They are applied within the activities they regulate to provide a favorable environment for the implementation of educational, scientific and managerial policies.

##### 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.

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| <b>Indicator</b><br>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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Knowledge of the labour market requirements, in terms of the needs and competence expectations at the time of employment of doctoral graduates in the assessed doctoral field, is necessary for establishing an adequate training framework. In this context, the opinions and expectations of potential employers are taken into account, together with those of doctoral students and graduates, as well as of the members of the doctoral school and the doctoral school council. Accordingly, various events are organised with economic operators together with periodic consultations, following which minutes are drawn up that include

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

the proposals and opinions of the partners. In order to ensure the efficiency and transparency of the consultation process, the proposals received during the discussions are centralised.

Feasible proposals formulated during the debates and consultations are incorporated into the adoption or revision stage of methodologies, regulations and procedures (IER p.12).

The Commission found that the doctoral field of Food Engineering (DSUD IPA) demonstrates a sustained interest and a systematic commitment to the active involvement of all stakeholders in the educational process. Feedback on academic and auxiliary staff, collected periodically from students, is analyzed with the aim of improving teaching and administrative services. Students are involved in the development and/or revision of procedures. Following the analysis of the observations, together with the additions resulting from the public debate, the documents are submitted to the USV Senate for approval and are subsequently published on the Quality Department website.

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.

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| Indicator<br>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. |
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The University has assets that contribute effectively to the fulfillment of its mission and objectives. DSUD IPA has its own facilities suitable for teaching activities, facilities dedicated to academic staff who perform the function of doctoral supervisor, laboratories with appropriate equipment and spaces for administrative activities. The equipment of the teaching and research spaces used by DSUD IPA corresponds to the current stage of development of technical, practical and scientific knowledge and is comparable to that of advanced European universities and international good practices, most of the equipment having been purchased in the last five years. The teaching spaces used by DSUD IPA are equipped with IT infrastructure and the software necessary for the teaching process.

Although the institution has adequate and well-equipped facilities and research infrastructures to support its academic activities, the analysis indicated that their potential for external collaborations and the provision of services to companies is not being fully utilized. A broader use of laboratories and research infrastructures in partnership with industry would enhance the impact of research activities and strengthen the relationship between the university and society.

**Recommendations: It is recommended to use all research infrastructures and laboratories to strengthen external collaborations and services with companies.**

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.

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| Indicator<br>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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The teaching, research and administrative facilities, together with the related equipment, are optimally used, with dedicated staff responsible for their maintenance. Within the doctoral field of Food Engineering, there is a member of the auxiliary teaching staff with relevant skills, who is responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of the heritage assets.

The Commission found that both the immovable and movable assets are used responsibly and maintained continuously, ensuring optimal conditions for teaching and research activities.

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.

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| Indicator<br>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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The Doctoral School of Applied Sciences and Engineering (SDAI) provides tenured academic staff whose main place of work is within the university, in a number appropriate to the population of doctoral students, depending on each doctoral field. As the organizer of the doctoral field of Food Engineering (DSUD IPA), SDAI ensures the coverage of all activities included in the curriculum with competent academic staff. The academic staff teaching within the DSUD IPA is made up of tenured members of the university, holders of diplomas in the assessed field and a doctoral degree and/or habilitation in the assessed doctoral field or in related fields. Within the DSUD IPA, doctoral supervision activities are carried out by five members of the academic staff, one of whom is over 65 years old.

The Commission found that the current composition of the academic staff reflects a balance between experience and professional dynamism, ensuring both academic stability and capacity for innovation. DSUD IPA maintains a continuous focus on renewing and complementing the academic staff with individuals of recognised academic and professional value, which contributes to diversification of available competences and to increased scientific visibility of the IPA field.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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| Indicator<br>I.P.A.3.1.2 | The HEI ensures professional and personal development for its staff. |
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USV consistently supports the professional and personal development of academic staff serving as doctoral supervisors through their involvement in continuous training, research, and didactic innovation activities. Academic staff within DSUD IPA have actively participated in projects funded through the Institutional Development Fund (FDI), aimed at modernising the educational process, digitalising teaching resources, and fostering applied research in food products engineering. The university has also organised training and professional development sessions within the COACH project, which provided concrete opportunities for training in modern university teaching methods, the use of digital technologies in education, and the development of transversal competences. Participation of doctoral supervisors in these activities reflects the institution's commitment to continuous staff development and to maintaining a high level of quality in the teaching process.

The Commission found that collaboration with various research institutions and partner universities provides opportunities for academic career development. Participation of academic staff in FDI projects and in COACH project activities reflects the institution's commitment to continuous staff development and to maintaining a high level of quality in the teaching process.

The indicator is fulfilled.

Standard S.A.3.2. Recruitment procedures

Teaching staff recruitment procedures compliant with the provisions of the law.

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| Indicator<br>I.P.A.3.2.1 | Recruitment procedures comply with the provisions of the law, and are established and carried out transparently. |
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Academic staff teaching within DSUD IPA have been recruited in accordance with legal provisions and USV regulations: the Regulation on filling vacant academic positions (R14), the Regulation on filling vacant or temporarily vacant teaching and research positions for a fixed term (R51) and the Regulation on the organisation and conduct of the habilitation process (R37) and meet all legal requirements (IER p17).

IOSUD-USV organises competitions for filling tenured academic positions in accordance with the staffing plan, leading to the appointment of new tenured academic staff. Since the last evaluation, one full professor position has been opened for competition within ȘDȘAI.

Following the analysis of the file and the data on the website, the commission found that at DSUD IPA level, recruitment procedures comply with the legal framework and ensure a transparent and standardised process for filling teaching and research positions, based on nationally established criteria.

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.

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| Indicator<br>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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A major contribution to the conduct of activities is provided by the Information and Communications Technology Service (SCTI), which operates under its own regulations and is responsible for configuring, administering, and maintaining the university Internet/Intranet network, as well as ensuring optimal traffic conditions and secure data transfers.

This service periodically prepares reports on the operational status of the IT system. ȘDȘAI maintains a webpage that is updated on a regular basis with useful information for doctoral students, academic staff, and prospective applicants for admission to DSUD IPA.

Although the institution effectively uses IT tools to support its procedures and ensure quality services for its academic community and beneficiaries, the analysis revealed that some information and software tools are not consistently available in English. This may limit accessibility and ease of use for international students, visiting researchers, and international co-supervisors.

**Recommendations:** It is recommended to have software tools and IT information in English to be used for international students, visiting researchers, and international co-supervisors.

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.

\* 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.

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| Indicator<br>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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The study disciplines included in the curriculum are organised in a logical sequence and are designed to meet the following requirements: expected learning outcomes; precise definition and delimitation of general and specialised competences for DSUD IPA, correlated with doctoral-level competences; and compatibility with similar study plans.

Course descriptions/syllabi are prepared by the course coordinator, then analysed and approved by the Field Coordinator, the Doctoral School Director, and the CSUD Director. The course descriptions are consistent with the assumed mission and include methodological guidance such as: information about the study programme and the course, the number of hours allocated to teaching activities, time allocation, professional and transversal competences that doctoral students may acquire, learning outcomes, course objectives, lecture and practical content (seminar/laboratory/project), recommended bibliographic sources, correlation of course content with expectations of the epistemic community, professional associations, and representative employers in the field, as well as the assessment method. These descriptions are available and can be consulted by students, and the questionnaire dedicated to doctoral students and graduates also includes questions regarding awareness, usefulness, and content of course descriptions. Information on the organisation of DSUD IPA is disseminated to students through the Student Guide and the ȘDȘAI web (IER p.18).

The doctoral programme is well structured, aligned with the expected learning outcomes, and organized according to the transferable credit system, the analysis indicated opportunities to further enrich the training offered to doctoral students..

**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.

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| Indicator<br>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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The study disciplines included in the curriculum are organised in a logical sequence and are designed to meet the following requirements: expected learning outcomes; precise definition and delimitation of general and specialised competences for DSUD IPA, correlated with doctoral-level competences; and compatibility with similar study plans.

Course descriptions/syllabi are prepared by the course coordinator, then analysed and approved by the Field Coordinator, the Doctoral School Director, and the CSUD Director. The course descriptions are consistent with the assumed mission and include methodological guidance such as: information about the study programme and the course, the number of hours allocated to teaching activities, time allocation, professional and transversal competences that doctoral students may acquire, learning outcomes, course objectives, lecture and practical content (seminar/laboratory/project), recommended bibliographic sources, correlation of course content with expectations of the epistemic community, professional associations, and representative employers in the field, as well as the assessment method (IER p.19).

Although the expected learning outcomes are aligned with the competences required by occupational standards and the ESCO framework, the analysis highlighted the need to strengthen links with the business sector in order to facilitate the effective use of the skills acquired by doctoral graduates. At present, companies' awareness of the added value that doctoral degree holders can bring to their organizations

could be further improved. Strengthening cooperation with the economic environment would support a better recognition of doctoral competencies and enhance employment opportunities beyond academia.

**Recommendations:** It is recommended to strengthen cooperation with private companies in the region to increase their awareness of the added value of doctoral graduates and to promote employment opportunities for doctoral holders in the non-academic sector.

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.

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| <b>Indicator</b><br>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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The coordinator of the doctoral field is responsible for monitoring the implementation of strategies and principles that ensure effective, student-centred learning. In this effort, the coordinator is supported by doctoral supervisors within the field, who advise doctoral students on educational situations that arise during the teaching and/or research process. CSUD develops its own methodologies for evaluating the teaching process, resulting in recommendations for updating the teaching methods and the education/research process applied by each academic staff member.

The curriculum of the advanced university studies-based training programme corresponding to DSUD IPA also includes optional courses which allow doctoral students to select a professional development pathway in order to acquire the professional and transversal competences required by professions in the field (IER p.20).

The commission found that DSUD IPA integrates modern teaching and assessment methods adapted to different learning styles, along with research activities, to support interdisciplinary training.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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| <b>Indicator</b><br>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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SDŞAI actively collaborates with various European universities through ERASMUS+ partnerships and the NEOLAiA consortium, thus strengthening an international educational network. These partnerships result in extended academic mobility programmes that include exchanges of students and academic staff, providing a solid basis for improving the academic experience and professional training (IER p.21).

The organisational component provides opportunities for doctoral students to participate in academic mobility programmes, both in person and virtually, the analysis indicated that participation in international mobility and research stays abroad could be further enhanced. Greater involvement in such activities would allow doctoral students to benefit more extensively from international academic environments, expand their research networks, and strengthen their scientific and professional development. Existing international collaborations within the doctoral programme offer valuable opportunities that could be more widely utilized by doctoral candidates.

**Recommendations:** It is recommended that doctoral students participate in international mobility programs and research stays abroad, encouraging them to benefit from existing international collaborations within the doctoral program.

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

USV, and implicitly IOSUD-USV and the Doctoral School of Applied and Engineering Sciences (ȘDȘAI), ensure equitable opportunities for doctoral students through an integrated approach that considers the diversity of learning styles and individual abilities. Within the doctoral study field Food Engineering (DSUD IPA) of ȘDȘAI, a variety of teaching methods are adopted, such as experimental learning, active learning, case studies, and interactive activities, while also ensuring equal access to modern educational resources, including online platforms. The doctoral training process includes diverse teaching methods, such as laboratory-based experimental activities, case studies, academic debates, interactive activities, and the use of digital learning platforms. These approaches support the development of research competences and allow the educational process to be adapted to the specific characteristics of each doctoral student. At the same time, doctoral students have equal access to research infrastructure, bibliographic resources, and online educational platforms that support documentation activities and the preparation of doctoral theses. In addition, institutional policies and concrete measures that support inclusion are implemented, such as support for doctoral students with special needs, scholarships for social cases and counselling services.

The organisational component provides fair opportunities for students in line with their potential and aspirations, and takes into account the diversity of learning styles and abilities, the analysis identified the need to further strengthen institutional support services. In particular, services related to psychological assistance, equality, and diversity are not yet sufficiently developed or systematically integrated. Enhancing these services would contribute to a more inclusive academic environment, better support student well-being, and ensure equal opportunities for all members of the academic community.

**Recommendations:** It is recommended to establish and strengthen institutional services related to psychological assistance, equality and diversity.

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.

An important role in supporting teaching and research activities within DSUD IPA is played by the University Library. At present, the library has five reading rooms, an internet room, and a home-loan service, enabling student access according to a convenient schedule. For DSUD IPA doctoral students, specialised holdings aligned with curriculum disciplines and subscriptions to periodicals are available consistent with DSUD IPA's assumed mission. There is also a sufficient number of subscriptions to Romanian and foreign publications and periodicals, both physical and online (through the Anelis+ programme), aligned with the assumed mission. Students have access to Elsevier ScienceDirect Freedom, SpringerLink, Wiley, Nature, OVID, IEEE journal collections, CAB eBooks and de Gruyter e-book collections, as well as international abstracting databases SCOPUS, Web of Knowledge, and CABI FSD, available through the ANELIS Plus association project and co-financed by USV (IER p.23).

DSUD IPA provides a supportive environment for in-depth documentation and high-quality scientific research through a range of dedicated resources and services, including access to the USV Library, subscriptions to relevant scientific journals and publications, and international research databases. These

resources are complemented by the guidance and monitoring provided by doctoral supervisory committees. In addition, at CSUD level, doctoral students benefit from social scholarships and other forms of financial and material support, granted in accordance with the institutional regulations, with the aim of facilitating their academic progress and supporting the successful completion of their doctoral studies.

The indicator is fulfilled.

#### Criterion B.5. Learning outcomes

##### Standard S.B.5.1. Definition and evaluation

Learning outcomes are adequately defined and evaluated.

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| Indicator<br>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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Learning outcomes are a component of the curriculum and reflect the expectations of the academic staff for each discipline included in the DSUD IPA curriculum regarding doctoral students' activity and preparation. The purpose of learning outcomes is to contribute to the development of competences necessary for practising professions in the evaluated doctoral field, in line with current labour market requirements. They are integrated into course descriptions and are correlated both with the specific objectives of each discipline and with the applied assessment criteria. For each discipline, learning outcomes are formulated clearly, measurably, and in close relation to the general objectives of the field of study. These outcomes are communicated to doctoral students at the beginning of the semester in order to provide a clear understanding of the competences to be acquired and how they will be assessed. Course descriptions follow a uniform format, and academic staff receive support through continuous training programmes for drafting and updating learning outcomes. There is also a direct correlation between these outcomes and the teaching and assessment methods used, and their quality is periodically monitored by the doctoral school council (IER p.23).

The evaluation committee concluded that the learning outcomes within DSUD IPA are appropriately aligned with the professional and transversal competences targeted by the doctoral programme. These outcomes are coherently reflected in the curriculum structure and course descriptions and are consistent with the specific requirements of the field of study. The doctoral programme provides graduates with the knowledge, skills, and competences necessary for successful integration into research, higher education, and other relevant professional sectors.

The indicator is fulfilled.

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| Indicator<br>I.P.B.5.1.2 | Achievement of the learning outcomes is checked in ongoing examinations and study completion exams. |
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The evaluation of learning outcomes within the doctoral study field Food Engineering (DSUD IPA) is carried out in accordance with the institutional regulations of "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava and with the provisions of the Regulation regarding the organization and conduct of doctoral studies. Examination scheduling is carried out by doctoral students in collaboration with the teaching staff. The level of learning outcomes is determined through assessments conducted during the semester and during the examination sessions. The evaluation methods used include written or oral examinations, thematic presentations, essays and individual projects, as well as the evaluation of research activities carried out within the disciplines included in the curriculum. These forms of assessment make it possible to verify the level of theoretical knowledge, the capacity for analysis and synthesis, as well as the methodological competences required for research activities. Learning outcomes are defined at the level of each discipline and are correlated with the competences targeted within the doctoral program. The documents regulating the educational and evaluation process are periodically updated to ensure compliance with internal quality standards, national legislation, and the requirements of the quality assurance system in higher education (IER p.24).

The evaluation committee found that DSUD IPA implements an effective and coherent system for assessing learning outcomes, based on the continuous monitoring of doctoral students' progress and on periodic and final evaluations. This system enables the verification of the theoretical, methodological, and research competences acquired throughout the doctoral studies.

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.

Admission of candidates to DSUD IPA is carried out in accordance with the Regulation on the organisation and conduct of admission examinations, approved by the Council for Doctoral University Studies and by the USV Senate, based on the annual framework methodology issued by the competent ministry. It is proposed that the maximum number of doctoral students who may be enrolled starting with the 2026–2027 academic year for DSUD IPA should be 7 students in total. When determining the maximum number of doctoral students that may be enrolled, the situation of the number of places allocated for admission, by category, as well as the enrolment situation over the last five years in the evaluated field (IER p.25).

The evaluation committee found that the admission policy of IOSUD–USV and the admission procedures specific to DSUD IPA are implemented in accordance with the national regulatory framework and the institutional regulations of USV. The admission requirements, procedures, and selection criteria are publicly available, clearly defined, and communicated in a timely manner through the university and faculty websites, as well as through other communication channels.

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.

The admission regulation and the institution's specific methodology include provisions concerning compliance with the principles of equity and equal opportunities. Distinct admission places are allocated to candidates coming from social and educational risk backgrounds (IER p. 25).

The admission procedures within the higher education study programmes are regulated in accordance with the principles of fairness and equal opportunities, as stipulated in the national framework and institutional regulations. The admission methodology includes specific provisions ensuring equal access for all categories of candidates. Dedicated admission places are allocated to applicants from socially and educationally vulnerable groups, supporting their access to higher education. These measures also take into account candidates with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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.

In order to facilitate and regulate doctoral students' professional activity, the Framework Regulation on students' professional activity was developed.

Within DSUD IPA, a coherent framework for the educational process is ensured through compliance with the provisions of the Regulation on students' professional activity, and the regulations regarding students' professional activity are applied. Study contracts are not amended during the academic year (IER p.25). The organisational component applies the regulations concerning students' professional activity, the analysis indicated that doctoral students are not yet sufficiently integrated into the broader social life of the institution. Strengthening their involvement in social activities would foster a greater sense of belonging, improve interaction within the academic community, and support the development of transversal skills. Increased participation in such activities would also contribute to a more cohesive institutional environment.

**Recommendations:** It is recommended to integrate doctoral students into social activities within the institution.

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.

ȘDȘAI has concluded partnerships with various European universities through the ERASMUS+ programme, the NEOLAI consortium, and other relevant international institutions, thereby strengthening an international educational network. Exchanges of doctoral students and academic staff facilitate both diversification of educational experiences and strengthening of research activities and professional training. For doctoral students, these collaborations provide valuable opportunities to study in diverse academic environments, access new teaching methods, and better understand intercultural perspectives. At the same time, academic staff benefit from opportunities for continuous professional development by participating in teaching activities, workshops, and international research projects, thus contributing to improved quality of the educational process and to enhanced individual expertise (IER p.26).

The organisational component implements international cooperation actions that support the mobility of its community members and collaboration in academic and research activities, the analysis highlighted the need to further expand and diversify these partnerships. In particular, collaborations with international researchers and specialists from industry sectors relevant to the doctoral field are not yet sufficiently developed. Strengthening such collaborations would enhance the international dimension of the doctoral programme, improve the transfer of knowledge between academia and industry, and increase the overall relevance and impact of research activities.

**Recommendations:** Collaborations with international researchers and specialists from industries related to the doctoral field are recommended.

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.

Doctoral students benefit from multiple opportunities to participate in conferences organised by USV or in partnership with USV, facilitating access to recent research results and interdisciplinary perspectives. At the same time, USV and CSUD leadership encourage and actively support participation in scientific events

organised by other higher education institutions in Romania and abroad, contributing to the broadening of academic horizons and the development of scientific communication skills (IER p.27).

Doctoral students benefit from a range of opportunities to participate in scientific conferences organised by USV or in partnership with the university, which support access to recent research developments and interdisciplinary perspectives. Participation in academic events organised by other higher education institutions in Romania and abroad is also encouraged and supported by USV and CSUD leadership. These activities contribute to the development of scientific communication skills and the broadening of academic experience.

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<br>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. |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Scientific research represents one of the fundamental missions provided for in the University Charter. The main directions of fundamental and applied scientific research carried out within DSUD IPA are integrated into the strategic plans of IOSUD and of the University. The specific scientific research plan, highlighting DSUD IPA. The research activity carried out by each doctoral supervisor is reflected in scientific publications in high-impact journals, invention patents, and the number of research and technology transfer contracts conduct (IER p. 27).

The scientific research results within the doctoral programme are visible at both national and international level; however, the analysis highlighted the need to strengthen scientific promotion and dissemination activities. The visibility of the results achieved by doctoral students, as well as of the doctoral programme as a whole, could be improved through a more structured approach to scientific communication. At present, dissemination and promotion activities do not fully exploit the potential impact of the research carried out.

**Recommendations:** It is recommended to increase the visibility and scientific promotion activities related to the doctoral program and the research carried out by doctoral students.

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<br>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 |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The functionality of education quality assurance structures represents a continuous concern both at university leadership level and at IOSUD level. The institutional quality assurance structure is organised in accordance with legal provisions and operates continuously, in line with the Quality Code, the Policy and Authority Statement in the field of quality, regulations and quality procedures.

At CSUD level, the internal annual quality evaluation report is prepared and included in the Rector's Report, supporting strategic and operational decision-making.

IOSUD has its own quality policy, supported by a set of strategies applied at IOSUD level, correlated with the CEAC-USV operational plan and aims to promote a culture of quality and the active involvement of all

members of the academic community—academic staff, doctoral supervisors, researchers, and students (IER p.28).

USV and IOSUD-USV implement a coherent quality assurance system aligned with European standards, supported by appropriate organisational structures, policies, and documented procedures. The system ensures quality in teaching, learning, research, and student services, through clearly defined mechanisms for evaluation and monitoring. It provides a framework for continuous improvement of academic and research processes.

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<br>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. |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Members of the academic community and stakeholders receive, via email or online announcements, information regarding the implementation of procedures, including notice of documents under public consultation for which proposals for amendment/update may be submitted.

“Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava promotes a quality management system based on consultation with and involvement of the academic community and other relevant stakeholders. In this context, the institutional procedures and documents that regulate academic and administrative activities undergo a process of information and consultation prior to their adoption or updating. Members of the academic community – teaching staff, researchers, doctoral students, and administrative personnel – are informed about documents under revision through institutional communication channels, such as e-mail notifications. Similarly, certain documents with an impact on educational and research activities are subject to public consultation, allowing stakeholders to submit proposals for modification or updating. These mechanisms enable the direct involvement of the academic community and contribute to the improvement of institutional procedures by integrating the experience and expertise of its members. (IER p.29).

The opinions of members of its own community and other stakeholders are taken into account in the implementation of procedures, the analysis indicated that structured collaborations between doctoral students and companies in the doctoral field are not yet sufficiently developed. Strengthening such collaborations would provide doctoral students with more applied research opportunities and closer contact with industry needs. This would also enhance the relevance and impact of doctoral research in an economic context.

Recommendations: Collaborations between doctoral students and companies in the doctoral field are recommended.

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<br>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. |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The activity of the University Ethics Committee is regulated in the University Charter, and by the regulations on the organisation and functioning of the committee. The committee acts independently of any other structure or person within USV, in accordance with the academic organisational chart. The annual report of the Ethics and Academic Integrity Committee is published on the university's website. The Ethics Committee performs its activities independently of any other structure or person within the university, in

compliance with the national legislation in force and with the provisions of the institution's internal regulations. The independence of this structure is also reflected in the institutional organization of the university, as indicated in the academic organizational chart, which guarantees the committee's decision-making autonomy in the analysis of ethical cases (IER p.29).

The institutional framework at USV ensures the promotion and monitoring of compliance with ethical principles and academic integrity. The Ethics and Academic Integrity Committee is responsible for addressing and resolving cases concerning potential breaches of ethical standards in teaching, research, and administrative activities. This structure supports an academic environment grounded in responsibility, transparency, and respect for professional norms.

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<br>I.P.C.3.1.1 | The organisational component consistently applies the procedures, and proves their impact on quality assurance. |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The initiation, monitoring, and periodic review of study programmes and fields are regulated through the Procedure for the development, revision, and approval of curricula and the Framework Regulation on the initiation, approval, monitoring, and periodic evaluation of study programmes.

The provisions of these documents are consistently applied when a new programme/field of study is initiated and during authorisation and periodic evaluation. In the periodic evaluation of the Doctoral School of Applied and Engineering Sciences and of DSUD IPA, which took place in 2021, the ARACIS Council decision of 16.12.2021 granted Continuation of accreditation (IER p.30).

The doctoral field IPA is organised and monitored in accordance with the institutional regulations and internal procedures of ŞDŞAI, IOSUD, and USV. A designated field coordinator is appointed for the IPA doctoral field within ŞDŞAI, ensuring the coordination and implementation of academic and administrative processes. These arrangements provide a structured framework for the management and supervision of doctoral studies in this field.

The indicator is fulfilled.

|                          |                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Indicator<br>I.P.C.3.1.2 | Members of its own community and other stakeholders are involved in the procedure implementation process. |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

USV and CSUD ensure a participatory and transparent process in implementing quality assurance procedures, actively involving doctoral students, academic staff, administrative staff, employers, and other stakeholders. This approach forms part of the university strategy for continuous improvement of education quality and for developing doctoral students' professional competences.

Doctoral students represent an essential part of decision-making and quality improvement processes through representation in university governance structures, CSUD, and the doctoral school council.

CSUD maintains close relations with employers and other organisations in order to adapt the educational offer to labour market requirements (IER p.31).

USV and CSUD implement a participatory and transparent approach in the application of quality assurance procedures, involving doctoral students, academic and administrative staff, employers, and other relevant stakeholders. Doctoral students are represented within university governance structures, CSUD, and the doctoral school council, ensuring their involvement in decision-making and quality improvement processes. CSUD also maintains regular cooperation with employers and external organisations to align the educational offer with labour market needs. This framework supports continuous improvement in the quality of doctoral education and the development of relevant professional competences.

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   | The organisational component analyses the results of the students' biannual evaluation of teachers. |
| I.P.C.4.1.1 |                                                                                                     |

Within "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava, the evaluation of teaching activities by students represents an important instrument of the internal quality assurance system. The evaluation process is conducted periodically, in accordance with the provisions of the Regulation on the Evaluation of Teaching Staff Performance and the Procedure on student evaluation of academic staff. At the level of doctoral studies, the members of the Council for Doctoral Studies (CSUD) coordinate the process through which doctoral students evaluate teaching staff and doctoral supervisors. The evaluation is carried out using standardized instruments that allow students to express their opinions regarding the quality of teaching activities, the clarity of course content delivery, the availability of teaching staff for academic guidance, and the effectiveness of the assessment of learning outcomes.

The results of the evaluation process are published on the university's website and communicated to academic staff/doctoral supervisors during semester meetings.

At institutional level, there is a regulation for evaluating the performance of auxiliary teaching staff and non-teaching staff, and the results of conducted evaluations are public (IER p.32).

The performance of teaching staff is evaluated on a periodic basis through a combination of assessment methods, including self-evaluation, peer review, student feedback, and managerial appraisal. These complementary mechanisms provide a comprehensive perspective on teaching activities and support the identification of both strengths and areas requiring improvement.

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   | The organisational component systematically collects and analyses data required for the internal quality assurance process. |
| I.P.C.5.1.1 |                                                                                                                             |

USV has an integrated IT system through which essential data for institutional management are periodically collected. These data are used both for reporting to the Ministry of Education and for assessing the overall evolution of the university, based on relevant indicators and analyses carried out at regular intervals (IER p.33).

USV operates an integrated IT system that ensures the periodic collection of essential data for institutional management. The information gathered is used for reporting purposes to the Ministry of Education and for monitoring the university's overall development. Regular analyses based on relevant indicators support the evaluation of institutional performance and trends over time. This framework ensures data-informed management and continuous institutional monitoring.

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   | The organisational component ensures publication and access to information of public interest regarding the evaluated study programme. |
| I.P.C.6.1.1 |                                                                                                                                        |

Essential information about the evaluated doctoral fields of study, including the curriculum, course descriptions, competences associated with the qualification, and the timetable of teaching activities, is available online with public access on the USV website, under the CSUD/Doctoral Studies section.

Through the university's institutional webpage, correlated with the CSUD webpage, a wide range of up-to-date public-interest information is provided, useful both for current doctoral students and for candidates or external beneficiaries (IER p.33).

Key information related to the evaluated doctoral study fields, such as curricula, course descriptions, associated competences, and teaching schedules, is publicly accessible on the USV website in the CSUD/Doctoral Studies section. The institutional website, in connection with the CSUD page, provides regularly updated information of public interest for doctoral students, prospective candidates, and external users. This ensures transparency and easy access to relevant academic data.

The indicator is fulfilled.

|                          |                                                                             |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Indicator<br>I.P.C.6.1.2 | The organisational component ensures transparent decision-making processes. |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Within "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava, the transparency of decision-making processes is ensured through institutional information and communication mechanisms that allow members of the academic community and the public to access the decisions adopted by the university's governing bodies. An important role in this process is played by the official website of the university, where documents and relevant information regarding the activity of decision-making structures are published. The decisions of the Administrative Council and the resolutions of the University Senate are regularly published on the institution's website, thus providing access to information regarding measures adopted at the institutional level and the university's development directions (IER p.34).

At USV, transparency in decision-making is ensured through institutional communication channels that provide access to relevant information for both the academic community and the public. The official university website functions as the main platform for publishing documents and updates concerning the activity of governing bodies. Decisions adopted by the Administrative Council and resolutions of the University Senate are regularly published online, ensuring public access to institutional measures and strategic directions.

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<br>The HEI undergoes external quality evaluation as required by the law. |                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Indicator<br>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. |

"Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava organizes the external quality evaluation process in accordance with the national legislation in the field of higher education and with the methodologies established by the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS). The procedures related to external evaluation are coordinated at the institutional level through the academic management structures and the internal quality assurance system. In this context, the Doctoral School of Applied and Engineering Sciences (ȘDȘAI), which includes the doctoral study field Food Engineering (DSUD IPA), full-time and part-time education, underwent the periodic quality evaluation procedure in 2021. Following this external evaluation, the doctoral program obtained the qualification Maintenance of Accreditation, a decision approved by the ARACIS Council during its meeting of December 16, 2021 (IER p.35).

At the level of IOSUD-USV and of the doctoral study field Food Engineering, the external evaluation process is organized periodically, in accordance with the legal framework and ARACIS methodologies, and periodic evaluation is carried out every 5 years.

The indicator is fulfilled.

## IV. SWOT Analysis

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ The doctoral programme plays a strategic role in the Northeast region of Romania, being the only doctoral programme in this field in the region.</li><li>✓ The doctoral programme maintains strong international research collaborations with universities, research centres and other international institutions.</li><li>✓ The doctoral programme addresses research topics of high relevance for the region and maintains active collaborations with local stakeholders and institutions.</li><li>✓ The institution has implemented measures and projects aimed at simplifying administrative and bureaucratic procedures.</li><li>✓ The doctoral programme benefits from modern and recently acquired research equipment, providing excellent conditions for advanced research activities and doctoral training.</li></ul> | <p><b>INTERNAL FACTORS</b></p> <p>↑</p> | <p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ More documentation, webpages and administrative information in English would further support the internationalisation process.</li><li>✓ The number of complementary training activities related to entrepreneurship, innovation, communication and science outreach could be increased</li></ul>                   |
| <p><b>SWOT analysis</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <p><b>Opportunities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ The existing international collaborations could facilitate new mobility opportunities, joint supervision agreements and international research projects.</li><li>✓ The strong connection of the doctoral programme with local and regional needs may increase future collaborations with companies, public</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <p><b>EXTERNAL FACTORS</b></p> <p>↓</p> | <p><b>Threats:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ The low number of candidates wishing to pursue doctoral studies.</li><li>✓ The limited collaboration between the economic environment and the activity of doctoral students.</li><li>✓ Insufficient public support for promoting academic values and motivating young people to pursue intellectual careers.</li></ul> |

|                                                                                                                                                                           |  |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
| institutions and local stakeholders.                                                                                                                                      |  |  |
| ✓ The growing interest of regional companies in innovation and knowledge transfer may create new opportunities for the employment of doctoral graduates outside academia. |  |  |

## 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.                               | <b>I.P.A.1.1.1</b> 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.                               | <b>I.P.A.1.2.1</b> 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.                               | <b>I.P.A.2.1.1</b> 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                                          | It is recommended to use all research infrastructures and laboratories to strengthen external collaborations and services with companies. |
| 4.                               | <b>I.P.A.2.2.1</b> The movable and immovable assets are properly maintained to ensure optimal conditions for studying, living and research, as well as for work.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | F                                          |                                                                                                                                           |
| 5.                               | <b>I.P.A.3.1.1</b> 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.                                                                          | F                                          |                                                                                                                                           |
| 6.                               | <b>I.P.A.3.1.2</b> The HEI ensures professional and personal development for its staff.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | F                                          |                                                                                                                                           |

| No.                                   | Performance Indicator                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF) | Recommendations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7.                                    | <b>I.P.A.3.2.1</b> Recruitment procedures comply with the provisions of the law, and are established and carried out transparently.                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | F                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 8.                                    | <b>I.P.A.4.1.1</b> 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                                          | It is recommended to have software tools and IT information in English to be used for international students, visiting researchers, and international co-supervisors                                                                           |
| <b>DOMAIN B. Educational efficacy</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 9.                                    | <b>I.P.B.1.1.1</b> 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.                                   | <b>I.P.B.2.1.2</b> 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                                          | It is recommended to strengthen cooperation with private companies in the region to increase their awareness of the added value of doctoral graduates and to promote employment opportunities for doctoral holders in the non-academic sector. |
| 11.                                   | <b>I.P.B.3.1.1</b> 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.                                   | <b>I.P.B.3.1.2</b> The organisational component ensures opportunities for students to participate in academic mobility programmes organised in person and/or virtually.                                                                                                                                                                             | F                                          | It is recommended that doctoral students participate in international mobility programs and research stays abroad, encouraging them to benefit from existing international collaborations within the doctoral program.                         |
| 13.                                   | <b>I.P.B.3.2.1</b> 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                                          | It is recommended to establish and strengthen institutional services related to psychological assistance, equality and diversity.                                                                                                              |
| 14.                                   | <b>I.P.B.4.1.1</b> 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                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 15.                                   | <b>I.P.B.5.1.1</b> 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                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

| No.                                 | Performance Indicator                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF) | Recommendations                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 16.                                 | <b>I.P.B.5.1.2</b> Achievement of the learning outcomes is checked in ongoing examinations and study completion exams.                                                                                                                                                                                                           | F                                          |                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 17.                                 | <b>I.P.B.7.1.1</b> The organisational component applies the admission procedures.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | F                                          |                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 18.                                 | <b>I.P.B.7.1.2</b> 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.                                 | <b>I.P.B.7.2.1</b> The organisational component applies the regulations concerning the students' professional activity.                                                                                                                                                                                                          | F                                          | It is recommended to integrate doctoral students into social activities within the institution.                                                                     |
| 20.                                 | <b>I.P.B.8.1.1</b> 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                                          | Collaborations with international researchers and specialists from industries related to the doctoral field are recommended.                                        |
| 21.                                 | <b>I.P.B.9.1.1</b> 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.                                 | <b>I.P.B.9.2.1</b> 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 increase the visibility and scientific promotion activities related to the doctoral program and the research carried out by doctoral students. |
| <b>DOMAIN C. Quality management</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                            |                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 23.                                 | <b>I.P.C.1.1.1</b> The organisational component consistently applies the procedures, and proves their impact on quality assurance.                                                                                                                                                                                               | F                                          |                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 24.                                 | <b>I.P.C.1.2.1</b> The opinions of the members of its own community and of other stakeholders are taken into account in the procedure implementation process.                                                                                                                                                                    | F                                          | Collaborations between doctoral students and companies in the doctoral field are recommended.                                                                       |
| 25.                                 | <b>I.P.C.2.2.2.</b> 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.                                 | <b>I.P.C.3.1.1</b> The organisational component consistently applies the procedures, and proves their impact on quality assurance.                                                                                                                                                                                               | F                                          |                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 27.                                 | <b>I.P.C.3.1.2</b> Members of its own community and other stakeholders are involved in the procedure implementation process.                                                                                                                                                                                                     | F                                          |                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 28.                                 | <b>I.P.C.4.1.1</b> The organisational component analyses the results of the students' biannual evaluation of teachers.                                                                                                                                                                                                           | F                                          |                                                                                                                                                                     |

| No. | Performance Indicator                                                                                                                                                                               | Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF) | Recommendations |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 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                                | 0                   | 0           |
| Domain B. Educational efficacy   | 14                               | 0                   | 0           |
| Domain C. Quality management     | 10                               | 0                   | 0           |
| Total                            | 32                               | 0                   | 0           |

## VI. Conclusions

### *Propose and substantiate a decision.*

Following the analysis of the internal evaluation report, the annexes and the public information available on the USV and IOSUD-USV websites, as well as the evidence collected during the evaluation visit, all 32 performance indicators were assessed as fulfilled. Therefore, the ARACIS evaluation committee proposes to maintain the accreditation of the doctoral study field Food Engineering at IOSUD - "Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava.

## VII. Annexes

*Enclose the schedule of the on-site visit, the list of the documents reviewed, as well as any other documents that are relevant for the evaluation procedure, which are referred to in the EER and cannot be accessed through links.*

## Calendarul vizitei de evaluare externă a calității domeniului de studii universitare de doctorat/ The timetable for the evaluation of the external quality evaluation visit for the doctoral university study domain

**Instituția de învățământ superior/Organizația furnizoare de educație/** Higher Education Institution / Education Provider Organization: Universitatea "Stefan cel Mare" din Suceava/ "Stefan cel Mare" University of Suceava

**Școala doctorală/** Doctoral School: Științe Aplicate și Inginerești/ Applied Sciences and Engineering

**Domeniul de doctorat/** Doctoral Domain: Ingineria produselor alimentare/ Food engineering

**Obiectivul evaluării externe/** The objective of the external evaluation: (autorizare de funcționare provizorie/acreditare/menținerea acreditării domeniului de doctorat) Menținerea acreditării domeniului de doctorat/ Maintaining accreditation of the doctoral field

**Perioada vizitei de evaluare/** The evaluation period: 28-29 mai 2026/28-29 may 2026

**Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/Evaluation panel:**

**Reprezentantul ÎS/OFE:**

| Nr./No. | Numele și prenumele/ Last Name and First Name | Calitatea/Team role                           |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| 1.      | <i>Rivis Adrian</i>                           | <i>Membru - Cadru didactic RNE</i>            |
| 2.      | <i>Coz Fernandez Alberto</i>                  | <i>Membru - Evaluator internațional RNE-I</i> |
| 3.      | <i>Stănescu Vlad Andrei</i>                   | <i>Membru - Student doctorand RNE-S</i>       |

| Nr./No. | Numele și prenumele/Last Name and First Name | Calitatea/Team role                       |
|---------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1.      | <i>Oroian Adrian - Mircea</i>                | <i>Persoană de contact/Contact person</i> |
|         |                                              |                                           |
|         |                                              |                                           |

| Intervalul orar/ Hour            | Activități de evaluare/ Evaluation activities                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Participanți/ Participants                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Locație/Location /Listă participanți/List of Participants  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Joi/ Thursday, 28.05.2026</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                            |
| 8:00-8:30                        | Discuții tehnice în cadrul comisiei de experți în evaluarea externă a calității/ <i>Technical discussions within the expert committee for external quality evaluation</i>                                                                                            | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Sala/Locația/ Room/Location: E008, corp E/ E building-E008 |
| 8:30-9:10                        | Întâlnirea comisiei de experți în evaluarea externă a calității cu reprezentanții conducerii componentei organizatorice/ <i>Meeting of the external quality evaluation experts' panel with the representatives of the management of the organisational component</i> | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i><br>- Reprezentanți ai conducerii componentei organizatorice aferente domeniului de studii de doctorat evaluat/ <i>Representatives of the management of the organisational component</i><br>- Persoana de contact/ <i>Contact person</i> | Sala/Locația/ Room/Location E008, corp E/ E building-E008  |

| Intervalul orar/ <i>Hour</i> | Activități de evaluare/ <i>Evaluation activities</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Participanți/ <i>Participants</i>                                                                                                                                                                          | Locație/ <i>Location</i> /Listă participanți/ <i>List of Participants</i> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9:10-9:20                    | Pauză/ <i>Break</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                           |
| 9:20-10:00                   | Întâlnirea comisiei de experți evaluatori în evaluarea externă a calității cu echipa care a realizat raportul de evaluare internă (REI)/ <i>Meeting of the external quality evaluation experts' panel with the team that has drafted the internal evaluation report</i> | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i><br>- Echipa care a realizat REI/ <i>Team that has drafted the IER</i>                                                                      | Sala/Locația/<br>Room/Location: E218                                      |
| 10:00-10:10                  | Pauză/ <i>Break</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                           |
| 10:10-12:10                  | Vizitarea bazei materiale/ <i>Visiting the material resources</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                       | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i><br>- Reprezentanți ai instituției sau Academiei Române, după caz/ <i>Representatives of the HEI or the Romanian Academy, as applicable</i> | Laboratories: E217, E219, E032/E034, E039, J1, J6 and J7                  |
| 12:10-13:00                  | Întâlnirea comisiei de experți în evaluarea externă a calității cu personalul didactic implicat în activitățile din cadrul DSUD/ <i>Meeting of the external quality evaluation experts' panel with the teaching staff involved in the activities within the DSUD</i>    | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i><br>- Cadre didactice conducători de doctorat/ <i>Teaching staff who are PhD supervisors</i>                                                | Sala/Locația/<br>Room/Location – E218                                     |
| 13:00-14:00                  | Pauză de prânz/ <i>Lunch</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                           |
| 14:00 - 14:50                | Întâlnirea comisiei de experți în evaluarea externă a calității cu responsabili centrului/laboratoarelor de cercetare / <i>Meeting of the external quality evaluation experts' panel with the staff in charge with the research centres/laboratories</i>                | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i><br>- Responsabili centrului/laboratoarelor de cercetare/ <i>Staff in charge with research centres/laboratories</i>                         | Sala/Locația/<br>Room/Location – E218                                     |
| 14:50-15:00-                 | Întâlnire tehnică a comisiei de experți evaluatori/ <i>Technical meeting of the expert evaluation panel</i>                                                                                                                                                             | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i>                                                                                                                                            | Sala/Locația/<br>Room/Location – E218                                     |
| 15:00-15:50                  | Întâlnirea comisiei de experți în evaluarea externă a calității cu studenți* doctoranzi din cadrul DSUD/ <i>Meeting of the external quality evaluation experts'</i>                                                                                                     | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i><br>- Studenți doctoranzi/ <i>Doctoral students</i>                                                                                         | Sala/Locația/<br>Room/Location – E218                                     |

\* Nu este obligatorie în cazul autorizării domeniilor de studii universitare de doctorat/ It is not mandatory in the case of authorization of doctoral university study domain.

| Intervalul orar/ <i>Hour</i>     | Activități de evaluare/ <i>Evaluation activities</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Participanți/ <i>Participants</i>                                                                                                                                                     | Locație/ <i>Location</i> /Listă participanți/ <i>List of Participants</i> |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                  | <i>panel with doctoral students of the DSUD</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                           |
| 15:50-16:00-                     | Întâlnire tehnică a comisiei de experți evaluatori/ <i>Technical meeting of the expert evaluation panel</i>                                                                                                                                                                                    | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i>                                                                                                                       | Sala/Locația/ Room/Location – E218                                        |
| 16:00-16:50                      | Întâlnirea comisiei de experți în evaluarea externă a calității cu absolvenți <sup>†</sup> , <sup>‡</sup> ai DSUD/ <i>Meeting of the external quality evaluation experts' panel with alumni<sup>‡</sup> of the DSUD</i>                                                                        | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i><br>- Absolvenți ai domeniului de studii evaluat/ <i>Graduates</i>                                                     | Sala/Locația/ Room/Location E218                                          |
| 16:50-17:00-                     | Întâlnire tehnică a comisiei de experți evaluatori/ <i>Technical meeting of the expert evaluation panel</i>                                                                                                                                                                                    | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i>                                                                                                                       | Sala/Locația/ Room/Location E218                                          |
| 17:00-17:50                      | Întâlnirea comisiei de experți în evaluarea externă a calității cu angajatori ai absolvenților DSUD/ <i>Meeting of the external quality evaluation experts' panel with employers<sup>§</sup> of the DSUD alumni</i>                                                                            | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i><br>- Angajatori/ <i>Employers</i>                                                                                     | Sala/Locația/ Room/Location E218                                          |
| <b>Vineri/Friday, 29.05.2026</b> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                           |
| 9:00 - 9:30                      | Întâlnirea tehnică a comisiei de experți evaluatori (Activitate în colaborare pentru clarificarea aspectelor prezentate în REI)/ <i>Technical meeting of the expert evaluation panel (Collaborative activity for clarifying the aspects presented in the Internal Evaluation Report - IER)</i> | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i>                                                                                                                       | Sala/Locația/ Room/Location – E008                                        |
| 9:30 - 10:20                     | Întâlnirea comisiei de experți în evaluarea externă a calității cu reprezentanți ai structurilor organizatorice în domeniul asigurării calității/ <i>Meeting of the external quality evaluation experts' panel with</i>                                                                        | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i><br>- Reprezentanți ai structurilor organizatorice în domeniul asigurării calității/ <i>Representatives of quality</i> | Sala/Locația/ Room/Location E008                                          |

\* Se va evita invitarea absolvenților care sunt angajați ai ÎIS sau ai OFE, după caz.

† Nu este obligatorie în cazul autorizării domeniilor de studii universitare de doctorat

‡ Avoid inviting alumni who are also staff of the HEI or members of the Romanian Academy, as applicable.

§ Avoid inviting employers who are also staff of the HEI or members of the Romanian Academy, as applicable.

| Intervalul orar/ <i>Hour</i> | Activități de evaluare/ <i>Evaluation activities</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Participanți/ <i>Participants</i>                                                                                                                                                                                             | Locație/ <i>Location</i> /Listă participanți/ <i>List of Participants</i> |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                              | <i>representatives of the quality assurance organisational structures</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <i>assurance organisational structures</i>                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                           |
| 10:20-10:30                  | Pauză/ <i>Break</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                           |
| 10:30 - 12:00                | Finalizarea activităților de evaluare/ <i>Completion of evaluation activities</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i>                                                                                                                                                               | Sala/Locația/ Room/Location – E008                                        |
| 12:00-13:00                  | Întâlnirea membrilor comisiei de experți evaluatori cu reprezentanții conducerii ÎS sau a OFE, după caz și ai conducerii componentei organizatorice pentru comunicarea concluziilor procesului de evaluare/ <i>Meeting of the members of the expert evaluators' panel with representatives of the management of the HEI or the EP, as applicable, and management of the organisational component, to communicate the conclusions of the evaluation process</i> | - Comisia de experți evaluatori ai ARACIS/ <i>Panel members</i><br>- Reprezentanți ai conducerii și ai domeniului de studii evaluat/ <i>Representatives of the management</i><br>- Persoana de contact/ <i>Contact person</i> | Sala/Locația/ Room/Location – E0088                                       |