

The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education



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

Higher Education Institution/Education Provider Organization:	"Babeş-Bolyai" University from Cluj-Napoca
Doctoral School:	Doctoral School of Applied Cognitive Psychology Doctoral School of Evidence-Based Assessment and Psychological Interventions
Doctoral Domain:	Psychology
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.	Alin Gavreliuc, Professor PhD	Expert evaluator	
2.	Sergiu Sănduleac, Professor PhD	International Expert	
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I. Introduction

This External Evaluation Report was prepared within the periodic external quality assurance procedure for maintaining the accreditation of the doctoral study domain Psychology, organized by Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, through IOSUD-UBB and the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences. The doctoral domain Psychology is supported by two doctoral schools: the Doctoral School of Applied Cognitive Psychology and the Doctoral School of Evidence-Based Assessment and Psychological Interventions. The evaluation concerns the doctoral domain as a whole, not the separate evaluation of the two doctoral schools. The two structures are considered complementary institutional and academic frameworks contributing jointly to doctoral training, advanced research and scientific development in Psychology.

The procedure was conducted in accordance with the Romanian Higher Education Law no. 199/2023, Government Decision no. 962/2024, and the ARACIS standards and performance indicators applicable to doctoral study domains.

Babeş-Bolyai University is a comprehensive, research-oriented and multicultural higher education institution, with a strong academic profile and a complex institutional structure. Within IOSUD-UBB, doctoral studies are coordinated through the Institute for Doctoral Studies and the relevant university structures responsible for quality assurance, academic regulation and doctoral management.

The doctoral domain Psychology benefits from a significant concentration of highly qualified doctoral supervisors, strong scientific visibility, diverse research directions and a substantial doctoral training infrastructure. The documentation analyzed indicates that the domain is supported by coherent institutional regulations, consistent research activity, adequate human resources and a doctoral environment oriented toward internationalization and academic performance.

The evaluation panel notes that the domain has a strong national profile and a clear international orientation, reflected in the scientific output of the doctoral supervisors, the integration of doctoral students into research activities and the availability of advanced research facilities.

II. Methods used

The external evaluation was based on the analysis of the Internal Evaluation Report prepared for the doctoral study domain Psychology, together with its annexes and the additional documents made available to the evaluation panel.

The documents analyzed included institutional regulations and procedures regarding doctoral studies, the organization of IOSUD-UBB, the functioning of the two doctoral schools supporting the domain, the list and status of doctoral supervisors, teaching workload documents, CNATDCU compliance files, doctoral training plans, research output, doctoral students' scientific activity, internationalization measures, research infrastructure and quality assurance mechanisms.

During the evaluation, the panel considered the contribution of both doctoral schools to the functioning of the Psychology doctoral domain. The assessment was conducted at domain level, with attention to the way in which the two schools jointly ensure academic coherence, research capacity, doctoral supervision and institutional support.

The evaluation also included meetings with representatives of the university, IOSUD-UBB, the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, the directors of the two doctoral schools, doctoral supervisors, doctoral students, graduates and relevant stakeholders. The panel also reviewed the educational and research infrastructure used in doctoral training.

The conclusions of this report are based on the correlation between the documentary analysis, the information collected during the evaluation visit and the requirements of the ARACIS standards and indicators for doctoral study domains.

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

DOMAIN A. Institutional capacity

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

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

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

Indicator I.P.A.1.1.1	For delivering the study programme/domain, the HEI has adequate organisational components and an adequate management system, which operate based on methodologies, regulations and procedures that are periodically reviewed as required by law.
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Findings:

The doctoral study domain Psychology is organized within IOSUD-Babeş-Bolyai University through two doctoral schools: the Doctoral School of Applied Cognitive Psychology and the Doctoral School of Evidence-Based Assessment and Psychological Interventions. The institutional framework governing doctoral studies is clearly regulated through university-level and IOSUD-specific methodologies, regulations and procedures, which are publicly available and periodically updated in accordance with national legislation and ARACIS requirements.

Analysis:

The documentation analyzed indicates the existence of coherent institutional structures and decision-making mechanisms supporting the organization and management of doctoral studies. The Institute for Doctoral Studies, the Council for Doctoral Studies (CSUD), the doctoral schools and the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences operate within a clearly defined governance framework, with explicit responsibilities regarding doctoral admission, supervision, evaluation, ethics, quality assurance and thesis completion procedures. The evaluation panel noted that the institutional organization supports academic coherence at domain level, while also allowing sufficient flexibility for the distinct scientific profiles of the two doctoral schools.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain benefits from complementary doctoral school structures covering diverse research directions in psychology, supported by stable governance mechanisms, coherent academic procedures and integrated quality assurance processes at IOSUD level.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

Standard S.A.1.2. Stakeholder engagement The HEI proves that it engages the relevant stakeholders in developing methodologies and regulations, as well as implementation procedures.	
Indicator I.P.A.1.2.1	The opinions of the faculty and department members, of the subsidiary or extension* and of other stakeholders are considered in the process of adopting and revising methodologies, regulations and implementation procedures.

Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that relevant stakeholders are involved in the development, implementation and revision of the regulations and procedures governing doctoral studies within IOSUD-UBB and the doctoral study domain Psychology. The institutional framework includes consultative and decision-making structures that allow the participation of doctoral supervisors, doctoral students and academic management representatives in governance and quality assurance processes.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that the doctoral domain operates within an institutional culture that supports participatory governance and academic consultation. The procedures regulating doctoral studies are periodically reviewed through structures involving members of the doctoral schools, IOSUD management bodies and doctoral student representatives. Discussions held during the evaluation visit confirmed the

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

active involvement of doctoral supervisors and doctoral students in academic and organizational processes concerning doctoral training, research activity and quality assurance. The documentation also reflects consultation mechanisms involving external stakeholders and professional partners relevant to the doctoral domain.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain demonstrates an integrated governance model that supports the participation of doctoral supervisors, doctoral students and institutional stakeholders in quality assurance and decision-making processes related to doctoral education.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

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

Standard S.A.2.1. Material resources

The HEI owns adequate movable and immovable assets to enable it to carry out the study programme/domain.

Indicator I.P.A.2.1.1	The HEI legally owns venues for the related education, research and administrative processes, as well as for services for students, doctoral students and trainees, thus providing an enabling environment for living and studying, including for disabled persons. Optimal venues are also provided for activities of the staff. Such venues are adequately equipped.
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Findings

Findings:

The doctoral study domain Psychology benefits from adequate educational, research and administrative infrastructure provided by Babeş-Bolyai University and the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences. The documentation analyzed and the evaluation visit confirmed the availability of teaching spaces, research laboratories, administrative offices, doctoral workspaces and student support facilities appropriate for doctoral training and advanced research activities.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that the doctoral domain has access to a substantial research infrastructure corresponding to the scientific profile of the two doctoral schools. The Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences provides specialized laboratories and research facilities supporting activities in cognitive psychology, clinical psychology, psychological assessment, psychotherapy research, neuroscience-related research and quantitative data analysis. The available infrastructure includes adequately equipped seminar rooms, computer-assisted research facilities, statistical and methodological support resources and access to scientific software relevant for doctoral research activities.

Doctoral students also benefit from access to the university library system and to extensive electronic scientific resources, including international databases, journals and academic platforms necessary for advanced research in psychology. The university ensures access to digital infrastructure and online academic services supporting both on-site and remote academic activities. The documentation and discussions during the visit confirmed that doctoral students have access to institutional facilities for research dissemination, academic mobility and interdisciplinary collaboration.

The panel also noted the existence of administrative and support services facilitating doctoral students' academic activity, including access to counseling, institutional communication structures and digital management platforms. The infrastructure made available to the doctoral domain provides an appropriate academic and research environment for doctoral students, doctoral supervisors and academic staff. The university provides extensive documentation and research resources through the "Lucian Blaga" Central University Library and its network of branch and specialized libraries. The library system includes numerous reading rooms with approximately 1,900 study places, serving a large academic community. In 2024, the total library collection exceeded 4 million volumes, complemented by substantial audiovisual and multimedia resources, as well as over 2.4 million electronic resources, most of them accessible online. The evaluation panel noted that doctoral students in Psychology benefit from broad access to

scientific literature, international databases and digital academic resources supporting advanced research activities.

The doctoral domain benefits from access to advanced research infrastructure and specialized laboratories supporting doctoral research across multiple areas of psychology. The Psytech-Matrix Platform for Robototherapy and Virtual Reality Psychotherapy includes immersive VR systems (CAVE and HMD), robotic-assisted intervention technologies and laboratories dedicated to anxiety interventions, digital psychological interventions, ADHD assessment and intervention, psychophysiological research and cognitive-behavioral therapies for children, adolescents and parents.

The domain also benefits from access to the BrainQ Center for Biomedical Imaging and Integrative Behavioral Medicine, which supports advanced neuroimaging research through structural and functional MRI infrastructure and physiological monitoring systems. Additional facilities include the Cognitive Neuroscience Laboratory, equipped with high-density EEG and fNIRS systems, the Developmental Psychology Laboratory with eye-tracking and behavioral observation technologies, as well as specialized research units in organizational psychology, health psychology, self and identity development and individual differences research. The evaluation panel noted that this infrastructure provides doctoral students with access to advanced experimental methodologies and internationally competitive research environments.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain benefits from access to advanced research laboratories, extensive digital academic resources and an integrated university library system supporting high-level doctoral research and international scientific visibility.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

Standard S.A.2.2. Management of material resources

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

Indicator
I.P.A.2.2.1

The movable and immovable assets are properly maintained to ensure optimal conditions for studying, living and research, as well as for work.

Findings:

The documentation analyzed and the evaluation visit confirmed that the movable and immovable assets used within the doctoral study domain Psychology are adequately maintained and continuously developed in order to ensure appropriate conditions for education, research and academic work. The doctoral domain benefits from modern educational and research facilities integrated within the infrastructure of Babeş-Bolyai University and the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that the university has implemented sustained measures for infrastructure modernization, digitalization and research support. The educational and research spaces used by the doctoral domain are appropriately equipped, functionally organized and adapted to the specific requirements of advanced research activities in psychology. Laboratories, seminar rooms, research platforms and doctoral workspaces are maintained at a good operational standard and support both individual and collaborative scientific work.

The doctoral domain also benefits from the university-wide sustainability program “UBB Goes Green”, implemented since 2016, which includes measures aimed at improving energy efficiency, reducing environmental impact, modernizing infrastructure and promoting sustainable institutional practices. The documentation reflects the integration of green policies into academic and administrative activities, including infrastructure rehabilitation, digitalization processes, optimization of resource consumption and support for environmentally responsible institutional management.

The evaluation panel also observed that the research infrastructure is periodically updated through institutional investments and research projects, supporting the use of advanced technologies in doctoral

research. The overall infrastructure provides a stable and supportive environment for doctoral students, doctoral supervisors and academic staff.

Good practices:

The integration of advanced research infrastructure with university-wide sustainability and digitalization policies contributes to a modern academic environment supportive of high-level doctoral research and long-term institutional development.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

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

Standard S.A.3.1. Human resources	
The HEI has the required human resources to organise and deliver the evaluated study programme/domain.	
Indicator I.P.A.3.1.1	The human resources of the organisational component are suitable to perform the activities pertaining to the evaluated study programme/domain. The teaching staff has the required qualifications and professional competences to teach the subject matters assigned to them in the job list.

Findings:

The doctoral study domain Psychology benefits from highly qualified academic staff and doctoral supervisors with strong scientific visibility and research performance. The two doctoral schools supporting the domain include a total of 14 doctoral supervisors, of whom 12 are tenured academic staff members at Babeş-Bolyai University, one is retired and continues activity through annually renewed contracts and one is affiliated as associate academic staff. The documentation analyzed confirms that doctoral supervisors meet the national standards required for doctoral supervision and possess scientific expertise corresponding to the research areas covered within the domain.

Analysis:

Within the Doctoral School of Applied Cognitive Psychology (PCA), doctoral supervision is ensured by eight doctoral supervisors, all affiliated with UBB. The number of supervised doctoral students ranges between 2 and 6 per supervisor, all within the limits established by national regulations. The school currently includes 37 doctoral students distributed as follows: Adriana Băban (4), Oana Benga (6), Petru Curşeu (6), Mircea Miclea (2), Andrei C. Miu (4), Oana Negru-Subțirică (3), Adrian Opre (6) and Laura Visu-Petra (6). The doctoral supervisors cover major research areas including emotional regulation and psychopathology, developmental psychopathology, health psychology, organizational psychology, e-mental health, implicit cognition, forensic psychology and identity development.

The Doctoral School of Evidence-Based Assessment and Psychological Interventions (PIPVS) includes six doctoral supervisors coordinating a total of 40 doctoral students. The distribution is as follows: Daniel David (10), Oana David (10), Anca Dobrean (7), Kristoffer Månsson (1), Aurora Szentágotai-Tătar (8) and Ștefan Szamosközi (4). The doctoral supervisors have internationally visible research profiles in evidence-based psychotherapy, clinical cognitive sciences, emotional regulation, digital interventions, child and adolescent clinical psychology and psychological assessment. The panel noted that two supervisors currently coordinate the maximum number of doctoral students allowed under national regulations, several of whom are in the final stages of doctoral studies.

The evaluation panel noted the strong research orientation of the doctoral domain and the high scientific productivity of its academic staff, reflected in research grants, ISI-indexed publications, international collaborations and significant scientific visibility. The doctoral supervisors collectively represent one of the strongest research communities in psychology at national level, contributing substantially to the academic profile and international competitiveness of the doctoral domain.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain benefits from a highly productive and internationally visible academic community,

integrating complementary expertise in cognitive, clinical, developmental, organizational and health psychology, supported by strong research performance and international scientific collaboration.

Recommendation: - Ensure a more balanced distribution of doctoral students among doctoral supervisors across the two doctoral schools, in order to support the sustainable development of the doctoral domain, maintain high-quality supervision standards and strengthen long-term research capacity and academic continuity.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

Indicator
I.P.A.3.1.2

The HEI ensures professional and personal development for its staff.

Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that Babeş-Bolyai University and IOSUD-UBB provide institutional mechanisms supporting the professional and personal development of academic staff involved in the doctoral study domain Psychology. The doctoral supervisors and academic staff benefit from opportunities for scientific development, research funding, international mobility, participation in conferences and access to advanced research infrastructure.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that the doctoral domain operates within a research-intensive academic environment that actively supports academic career development and scientific performance. Academic staff are involved in national and international research projects, editorial activities, scientific networks and collaborative research initiatives. The university supports participation in international conferences, research exchanges and mobility programs, contributing to the consolidation of international visibility and academic competitiveness.

The two doctoral schools benefit from strong research cultures and active involvement in internationally relevant scientific activities. The scientific profiles of doctoral supervisors reflect sustained publication activity, participation in competitive grants and collaboration within international research communities. Access to advanced research platforms, laboratories and digital scientific resources further supports the continuous professional development of academic staff.

The panel also noted that the institutional environment encourages interdisciplinary collaboration, innovation in research methodologies and the integration of emerging technologies in psychological research and doctoral supervision. These mechanisms contribute to maintaining a high academic standard within the doctoral domain and support the long-term development of its human resources.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain benefits from a strong research-oriented academic culture supporting continuous professional development, international scientific collaboration and active involvement of academic staff in competitive research environments.

Recommendation: - Continue supporting international mobility, interdisciplinary collaboration and balanced academic workload distribution in order to strengthen the long-term sustainability and international competitiveness of the doctoral domain.

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

Standard S.A.3.2. Recruitment procedures

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

Indicator
I.P.A.3.2.1

Recruitment procedures comply with the provisions of the law, and are established and carried out transparently.

Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the recruitment and selection procedures applicable within the doctoral study domain Psychology comply with national legislation and institutional regulations and are implemented transparently through IOSUD-UBB and the regulations of the two doctoral schools. Recruitment procedures concerning doctoral supervisors, doctoral students and academic staff are publicly available and include explicit academic and scientific criteria.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that the doctoral domain applies rigorous and transparent academic standards regarding the recruitment and inclusion of doctoral supervisors within the two doctoral schools. According to the regulations of the Doctoral School of Applied Cognitive Psychology (PCA) and the Doctoral School of Evidence-Based Assessment and Psychological Interventions (PIPVS), candidates seeking affiliation as doctoral supervisors must demonstrate substantial scientific performance and academic visibility. The selection criteria include at least 10 international publications as first author in Web of Science indexed journals ranked Q1 or Q2, a minimum of two competitive research grants as project director, active grant leadership within the last five years and a Hirsch index of at least 10 in Web of Science.

The degree to which these standards are fulfilled is evaluated by the councils of the doctoral schools, which decide on the admission or rejection of candidates based on documented academic performance and scientific relevance. The panel noted that these criteria exceed the minimum national requirements and contribute to maintaining a highly competitive and research-oriented academic environment within the doctoral domain.

The documentation and discussions during the evaluation visit also confirmed that doctoral student admission procedures are regulated through transparent institutional methodologies, publicly communicated criteria and competitive admission mechanisms consistent with the scientific profile of the domain.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain applies highly selective and research-oriented recruitment standards for doctoral supervisors, contributing to the consolidation of a scientifically competitive and internationally visible doctoral environment.

Recommendation: -

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.

Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that Babeş-Bolyai University and IOSUD-UBB have implemented multiple digital platforms and online administrative services supporting the digital transformation of doctoral studies and the simplification of administrative procedures. The doctoral study domain Psychology benefits from integrated digital infrastructure facilitating communication, academic management and access to institutional services.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that IOSUD-UBB has developed several digital platforms supporting the management of doctoral activities and improving administrative efficiency. These include an electronic clearance form platform, online request and appointment systems for doctoral administrative services, and a dedicated preregistration platform for non-EU candidates allowing preliminary verification of admission documents. The university also maintains dedicated online resources for doctoral students, including the "PhDnews" platform, which disseminates information regarding conferences, research activities, publications and scientific opportunities relevant to doctoral training and research dissemination.

The digital infrastructure supports administrative simplification, transparency and accessibility of services for doctoral students and academic staff. The evaluation panel also noted the integration of digital tools within research, communication and academic management processes, contributing to a flexible and efficient doctoral environment. In addition, the PCA and PIPVS doctoral schools provide doctoral students with access to specialized research software and digital research resources, including Comprehensive Meta-Analysis, MATLAB and Qualtrics, acquired through doctoral school funding and used in advanced

quantitative analysis, experimental research and online data collection. These resources further support the development of high-level doctoral research competencies and methodological rigor.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain benefits from an extensive digital ecosystem integrating online administrative services, electronic academic management tools and specialized research software supporting advanced doctoral research and academic communication.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

DOMAIN B. Educational efficacy

Criterion B.1. Content and relevance of study programmes

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

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

Indicator I.P.B.1.1.1	The university study programme is developed and structured in relation to the expected learning outcomes and is organised based on the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System. It covers all learning, teaching, practical training, research, and assessment activities that jointly underpin a higher education degree.
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Findings:

The doctoral study domain Psychology is based on a curriculum designed to ensure the acquisition of advanced research competencies, scientific expertise and professional qualifications corresponding to the learning outcomes expected at doctoral level. The documentation analyzed indicates that the doctoral training programs offered through the two doctoral schools are aligned with the scientific profile of the domain and with the occupational standards and qualifications relevant to advanced academic and research careers in psychology.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that the curriculum of the doctoral domain integrates advanced research training, specialized methodological preparation and individualized scientific supervision. The training structure supports the development of competencies in scientific research, academic teaching, psychological assessment, evidence-based interventions, quantitative and qualitative methodologies and interdisciplinary scientific collaboration.

The learning outcomes are consistent with several professional and academic profiles included in the European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO) classification system. These include Behavioral Sciences Researcher (ESCO code 2632.3), University Research Assistant (ESCO code 2310.1.41), Higher Education Teacher (ESCO code 2310.1), University Lecturer in Psychology (ESCO code 2310.1.35), University Teaching Assistant (ESCO code 2310.1.42) and Assistant Lecturer (ESCO code 2310.1.5). The curriculum therefore supports both advanced scientific research competencies and the development of academic teaching capacities relevant for higher education and research careers.

The doctoral domain benefits from complementary scientific orientations provided by the two doctoral schools. The PCA doctoral school emphasizes cognitive sciences, developmental psychology, emotional regulation, organizational psychology and neuroscience-oriented methodologies, while the PIPVS doctoral school focuses on evidence-based psychological interventions, clinical cognitive sciences, psychotherapy research and technology-assisted interventions. The evaluation panel noted that this structure ensures broad thematic coverage and supports the development of complex and internationally relevant doctoral research projects.

The curriculum is supported by advanced research infrastructure, digital research resources and active integration of doctoral students into scientific projects, conferences and publication activities. The panel

* 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.

considers that the doctoral training structure adequately supports the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and the development of high-level academic and research competencies.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain integrates complementary doctoral training models and internationally relevant research directions, aligned with European occupational standards and supported by advanced methodological and scientific infrastructure.

Recommendation: -

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.

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).

Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the expected learning outcomes of the doctoral study domain Psychology are correlated with the competencies required for advanced research and academic occupations included in the ESCO classification framework. The doctoral curriculum supports the development of scientific, methodological, teaching and professional competencies consistent with careers in higher education, behavioral sciences research and evidence-based psychological practice.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted clear correlations between the intended learning outcomes and the competencies associated with the occupational profiles targeted by the doctoral domain. For the occupation Behavioral Sciences Researcher (ESCO code 2632.3), the curriculum develops competencies related to advanced research design, quantitative and qualitative data analysis, experimental methodologies, scientific publication and interdisciplinary research collaboration. These competencies are supported through doctoral research activities conducted in laboratories such as the Cognitive Neuroscience Laboratory, Psytech-Matrix Platform and BrainQ neuroimaging infrastructure. For occupations in higher education and academic research, including Higher Education Teacher (ESCO code 2310.1), University Lecturer in Psychology (ESCO code 2310.1.35), University Research Assistant (ESCO code 2310.1.41) and University Teaching Assistant (ESCO code 2310.1.42), the doctoral training structure supports competencies in scientific communication, university teaching, supervision of academic activities, curriculum-related expertise and dissemination of scientific knowledge. Doctoral students are actively involved in research projects, conference presentations, publication activities and academic collaboration within the two doctoral schools, facilitating the development of academic and pedagogical competencies relevant for university careers.

The PCA doctoral school contributes particularly to competencies related to cognitive sciences, emotional regulation, developmental psychology, organizational psychology and neuroscience-based methodologies, while the PIPVS doctoral school supports competencies in evidence-based psychological interventions, clinical cognitive sciences, psychotherapy research and technology-assisted psychological assessment and intervention. The panel noted that the doctoral curriculum ensures coherence between research training, methodological preparation and the competency profiles associated with the targeted occupations.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain demonstrates strong alignment between doctoral learning outcomes, advanced research training and the competency profiles required for academic and scientific occupations included in the ESCO framework.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

Standard S.B.3.1 Principles

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

Indicator I.P.B.3.1.1	The organisational component ensures implementation of the student-centred learning in the curriculum and through the teaching strategies used in the learning and teaching activities and experiences.
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Findings:

The documentation analyzed and the discussions conducted during the evaluation visit indicate that the doctoral study domain Psychology implements student-centered learning principles through individualized doctoral supervision, flexible research pathways and active involvement of doctoral students in scientific and academic activities. The organization of doctoral training supports the development of independent research competencies, critical thinking and academic autonomy.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that the doctoral training process is strongly centered on the individual research needs, scientific interests and professional development objectives of doctoral students. The individualized relationship between doctoral supervisors and doctoral students allows the adaptation of research trajectories, methodological training and scientific activities to the specific profile of each doctoral project. The two doctoral schools provide access to complementary research infrastructures, advanced methodological resources and interdisciplinary scientific environments, supporting flexible and personalized doctoral development.

Doctoral students are actively integrated into research projects, laboratory activities, scientific conferences, publication initiatives and international collaborations. The available infrastructure, including advanced laboratories, neuroimaging facilities, virtual reality platforms and specialized research software, supports experiential and research-based learning approaches. The panel also noted that doctoral students benefit from access to digital academic resources, scientific databases and institutional platforms facilitating academic communication and research dissemination.

The evaluation visit confirmed the active participation of doctoral students in academic decision-making and quality assurance processes through representation within doctoral school governance structures. Discussions with doctoral students indicated a high level of satisfaction regarding academic support, accessibility of supervisors and opportunities for scientific and professional development.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain promotes a research-intensive and student-centered doctoral environment through individualized supervision, integration of doctoral students into active research teams and access to advanced interdisciplinary research infrastructure.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

Indicator I.P. B.3.1.2	The organisational component ensures opportunities for students to participate in academic mobility programmes organised in person and/or virtually.
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Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the doctoral study domain Psychology ensures opportunities for doctoral students to participate in academic mobility programs, international collaborations and interuniversity academic activities organized both physically and virtually. The university supports internationalization through institutional partnerships, European university networks and mobility recognition procedures.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that Babeş-Bolyai University provides doctoral students with access to multiple international mobility and academic collaboration opportunities through Erasmus+, bilateral partnerships and participation in the EUTOPIA European University alliance. Since joining EUTOPIA, the university has strengthened its internationalization strategy by facilitating collaborative educational and

research activities among partner universities and encouraging student participation in international academic networks.

The university supports interuniversity initiatives combining education, research and innovation through recognition mechanisms such as EUTOPIA labels, certificates and microcredentials awarded according to internal institutional procedures. The panel also noted the participation opportunities offered through projects such as “DISCOVER Student Experiences at EUTOPIA Innovation Challenges”, aimed at stimulating creativity, innovation and entrepreneurial thinking among students within the alliance universities.

The documentation confirms that the university formally recognizes study periods and academic activities carried out abroad, supporting the academic mobility of doctoral students and facilitating the integration of international experiences within doctoral training pathways. Discussions during the evaluation visit indicated that doctoral students are encouraged to participate in conferences, research exchanges, international collaborations and virtual academic activities, benefiting from institutional support and access to international research networks.

Good practices:

The integration of the doctoral domain within the EUTOPIA European University alliance provides doctoral students with diversified international mobility opportunities, innovative collaborative formats and access to transnational academic and research networks.

Recommendation: -

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

Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the doctoral study domain Psychology provides equitable academic opportunities for doctoral students, taking into account individual research interests, academic potential and diverse educational and professional needs. The institutional framework promotes equal access to academic resources, research infrastructure, mobility opportunities and support services for doctoral students.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that the doctoral domain implements flexible and individualized doctoral training pathways through personalized supervision, access to interdisciplinary research environments and integration into scientific projects adapted to doctoral students’ research interests and competencies. The two doctoral schools provide doctoral students with access to advanced laboratories, digital infrastructure, scientific databases and methodological resources supporting different research approaches and learning styles.

The university also promotes inclusion and equity policies through institution-wide support mechanisms. In 2023, UBB continued the implementation of the project “Open2UBB – Increasing Inclusion Capacity through Adequate Academic Support Measures” (CNFIS-FDI-2023-F-0394), aimed at facilitating access to higher education, aligning educational provision with labor market requirements and strengthening the university’s institutional capacity to respond sustainably to societal challenges. The evaluation panel noted that these measures contribute to an inclusive academic environment and support equal participation opportunities for students from diverse educational and social backgrounds.

Discussions conducted during the evaluation visit confirmed that doctoral students benefit from accessible communication with supervisors, academic counseling, institutional support services and opportunities for participation in research, teaching and international academic activities. The panel considers that the doctoral domain provides an academic environment supportive of diversity, inclusion and individualized doctoral development.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain combines individualized doctoral supervision with institution-wide inclusion and equity policies, supporting diverse learning trajectories and equitable access to advanced academic and research opportunities.

Recommendation: Given the uncertainty associated with public research funding, the doctoral school is encouraged to further continue and diversify its funding base by strengthening partnerships with private-sector and non-governmental organisations. Such collaborations could support competitive doctoral scholarships throughout the entire doctoral cycle while preserving academic independence and research integrity. In turn, doctoral research could provide scientifically grounded evidence, diagnostic assessments, and evidence-based intervention frameworks addressing topics of strategic relevance for organisational, institutional, and community development, thereby enhancing both the societal impact and the sustainability of doctoral education.

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

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

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

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

Indicator I.P.B.4.1.1	The organisational component provides students, including those with special educational needs/disabilities, with access to resources and services designed to support the learning process, adequate for the individual learning needs, the study domain, the study cycle, and the form of organisation of the study programme.
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Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the doctoral study domain Psychology provides doctoral students, including students with special educational needs and disabilities, with access to academic resources, research infrastructure and institutional support services adapted to the specific requirements of doctoral education.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that doctoral students benefit from access to advanced laboratories, digital academic resources, library services, online platforms and specialized research software supporting the learning and research process. The university also provides institutional support services and accessibility measures designed to facilitate equal participation in academic activities and access to educational infrastructure for students with diverse learning needs and abilities.

Particular attention is given to accessibility and inclusion through the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD), which plays an active role in identifying appropriate solutions for the assessment of students with disabilities and in addressing accessibility-related issues. The Center provides continuous recommendations to academic staff regarding the adaptation of teaching and learning materials for students with special educational needs. These activities were additionally supported through the institutional development project CNFIS-FDI-2024-F-0292.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain combines access to advanced research infrastructure with inclusive institutional support mechanisms adapted to doctoral students' academic and research needs.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

Criterion B.5. Learning outcomes

Standard S.B.5.1. Definition and evaluation

Learning outcomes are adequately defined and evaluated.

Indicator I.P.B.5.1.1	Learning outcomes are adequately described, and they support understanding of the students' and teachers' expectations regarding the content of the subject matters in the curriculum.
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Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the intended learning outcomes of the doctoral study domain Psychology are generally formulated in accordance with the scientific profile and academic objectives of the domain and support the organization of doctoral training activities. The curriculum and doctoral training structure reflect the development of advanced research competencies, scientific autonomy and academic expertise relevant to doctoral education in psychology.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that the expected learning outcomes are reflected in the structure of the doctoral training activities and in the scientific competencies targeted through doctoral supervision and research activities. The curriculum supports the development of advanced competencies in research design, scientific communication, critical analysis, evidence-based psychological interventions and interdisciplinary collaboration.

The panel confirms that the intended learning outcomes of the doctoral domain are currently formulated and operationalized in accordance with the updated ARACIS standards and are appropriately structured across the dimensions of knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy. The learning outcomes are clearly defined, measurable, and consistently reflected in the curriculum, doctoral training activities, and assessment mechanisms.

The panel also found that the learning outcomes are aligned with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the National Qualifications Framework, and relevant European reference frameworks for psychology and doctoral education, including the competency logic promoted by EuroPsy and ESCO. This alignment contributes to the transparency, coherence, and international comparability of the doctoral training provided within the domain.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain demonstrates a coherent competency-based approach to doctoral education, with learning outcomes explicitly articulated in terms of knowledge, skills, responsibility and autonomy, and systematically integrated into the design and implementation of the doctoral training process.

Recommendation: -**The indicator is: Fulfilled**

Indicator I.P.B.5.1.2	Achievement of the learning outcomes is checked in ongoing examinations and study completion exams.
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Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the achievement of learning outcomes within the doctoral study domain Psychology is evaluated through ongoing academic assessment, periodic research monitoring and doctoral thesis evaluation procedures. The assessment mechanisms are regulated through IOSUD-UBB and doctoral school procedures and include both formative and summative evaluation components.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that doctoral students' progress is monitored continuously through research presentations, periodic evaluations, participation in doctoral training activities, scientific dissemination and the supervision process coordinated by doctoral supervisors and doctoral guidance committees. The assessment procedures are aligned with the research-oriented profile of doctoral education and emphasize scientific rigor, methodological quality and academic integrity.

The achievement of intended learning outcomes is also reflected in doctoral students' participation in conferences, publication activities, research projects and thesis-related scientific outputs. Final assessment is ensured through the public defense of the doctoral thesis, conducted according to national regulations and institutional procedures. The panel noted that the evaluation mechanisms support the progressive development of advanced research competencies and academic autonomy throughout the doctoral training cycle.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain combines continuous research monitoring with structured thesis evaluation

procedures, supporting the progressive development and assessment of advanced doctoral competencies.

Recommendation: -

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.

Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the doctoral study domain Psychology applies admission procedures in accordance with national legislation, IOSUD-UBB regulations and the specific regulations of the two doctoral schools. Admission procedures, evaluation criteria and available positions are publicly communicated and implemented transparently.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that admission procedures within the PCA and PIPVS doctoral schools are implemented in accordance with IOSUD-UBB regulations and are organized through annual competitive admission sessions, usually in July and September. The admission process includes a written examination based on publicly announced topics and bibliography, as well as the presentation of a research proposal designed to assess candidates' scientific interests and research potential. Admission committees are appointed through institutional procedures involving the doctoral school management structures, while information regarding the admission calendar, eligibility conditions and evaluation criteria is publicly available prior to the competition. The administrative process also includes online preregistration, file verification and the conclusion of doctoral study contracts following validation of admission results.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain applies transparent and research-oriented admission procedures aligned with the scientific profile and academic standards of the two doctoral schools.

Recommendation: -

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.

Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that admission procedures within the doctoral study domain Psychology are organized in accordance with the principles of fairness, transparency and equal opportunities, while also including institutional support measures for candidates from vulnerable groups and for candidates with special educational needs or disabilities.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that admission procedures are publicly communicated and uniformly applied, ensuring equal treatment of candidates throughout the admission process. The university also implements institutional inclusion and accessibility policies designed to facilitate participation of candidates from disadvantaged backgrounds and of candidates with special educational needs or disabilities, including administrative support and accessibility measures coordinated at university level.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain benefits from transparent admission procedures integrated within broader institutional policies promoting inclusion, accessibility and equal opportunities.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

Standard S.B.7.2. Academic journey of students

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

Indicator I.P.B.7.2.1	The organisational component applies the regulations concerning the students' professional activity.
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Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the doctoral study domain Psychology applies the regulations concerning doctoral students' academic and professional activity in accordance with national legislation, IOSUD-UBB regulations and the internal regulations of the two doctoral schools.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that doctoral students' academic activity is regulated through clear procedures regarding enrollment, progression, supervision, evaluation, interruption or extension of studies, mobility, thesis completion and public defense. The regulations governing doctoral activity are publicly available and consistently implemented at domain and doctoral school level. Discussions during the evaluation visit confirmed that doctoral students are informed about their academic rights and obligations and benefit from institutional support throughout the doctoral training process. In the same time, the evaluation panel also noted that doctoral students are represented within the governance structures of the doctoral schools. In accordance with institutional regulations, doctoral students are included in the Doctoral School Councils, holding 25% of the positions within these structures, thus contributing to participatory governance and the representation of doctoral students' academic interests.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain applies coherent and transparent regulations concerning doctoral students' academic and professional activity, ensuring consistency and predictability throughout the doctoral training cycle.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

Criterion B.8. Internationalisation process

Standard S.B.8.1. Internationalisation

Improving the quality of education and research through internationalisation actions.

Indicator I.P.B.8.1.1	The organisational component carries out international cooperation actions supporting mobility of the members of its own community and collaboration in academic and research activities.
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Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the doctoral study domain Psychology carries out extensive international cooperation activities supporting academic mobility, international research collaboration and participation in international academic networks. The domain benefits from the internationalization strategy of Babeş-Bolyai University and from the integration of doctoral students and academic staff into international research and educational partnerships.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted a high level of international exposure and academic mobility within the doctoral domain. Between 2021 and 2025, 69 out of 144 doctoral students participated in at least one international mobility activity, including research stays abroad, conferences, summer schools or other academic mobility formats. The panel considers this participation rate significant for doctoral-level internationalization and scientific integration.

The doctoral domain also benefits from the university's participation in the EUTOPIA European University alliance, which supports collaborative educational and research initiatives, international academic networking and innovative mobility formats. International cooperation is further reflected in the organization of lectures, courses and scientific meetings involving invited professors and researchers from abroad, as well as through the participation of international experts in doctoral guidance committees and doctoral thesis defense committees. The documentation also indicates the involvement of doctoral

supervisors affiliated with foreign universities, contributing to the international scientific profile of the doctoral domain.

In addition, the organization of international conferences and workshops in Cluj-Napoca further strengthens the internationalization profile of the domain by attracting international scientific communities and facilitating academic collaboration. Recent examples include the “4th Perfectionism Network Meeting” (July 9–10, 2024), the annual conference of the European Association of Psychology and Law (July 4–7, 2023) and two international workshops organized in the Smart Diaspora conference (November 4–7, 2025).

The evaluation panel noted that international collaboration activities are strongly connected to the research-intensive profile of the domain and contribute substantially to the international visibility, scientific competitiveness and academic development of doctoral students and doctoral supervisors.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain demonstrates a strong internationalization profile through high doctoral student mobility rates, active participation in European university networks and systematic involvement of international experts in doctoral training and research activities.

Recommendation: -

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.

Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the doctoral study domain Psychology integrates research-based learning and scientific investigation as core components of doctoral training and competency development.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that, within both the PIPVS and PCA doctoral schools, the doctoral training structure combines advanced academic preparation with an individual research program strongly focused on scientific investigation and research outcomes. In addition to the advanced training component (minimum 30 ECTS), doctoral students are required to complete an individual research program including a research project presentation during the first year of study (30 ECTS) and annual research reports in the following years (60 ECTS each). These mandatory milestones transform scientific progress into measurable learning outcomes, requiring doctoral students to formulate research questions, design studies, collect and analyze data, interpret findings and periodically present research results. The panel considers that this structure effectively integrates research activity into the learning process and supports the development of advanced scientific competencies and academic autonomy.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain integrates structured individual research activities and periodic scientific evaluation milestones directly into the doctoral training process, ensuring strong alignment between research activity and learning outcomes.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

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

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

Indicator
I.P.B.9.2.1

The results of scientific research are visible at national and international level in that scientific domain, and capitalised upon in an adequate manner.

Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the doctoral study domain Psychology demonstrates strong scientific productivity and high national and international research visibility, supported by substantial publication output, participation in international scientific networks and involvement in competitive research projects.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that, during the last five academic years, the doctoral domain reported more than 700 scientific publications, including journal articles, books, book chapters and conference proceedings. Approximately 50% of these publications were published in internationally visible journals indexed in recognized scientific databases such as Web of Science. During the same period, the domain also reported involvement in more than 71 national and international research projects, supporting scientific productivity, collaborative research and international academic visibility.

The panel observed that international scientific visibility is institutionally supported through explicit criteria defining participation in the international scientific community. These include presentations at international conferences, publication of research results in internationally indexed journals and volumes, contributions to international books and book chapters, co-authorship and collaborative projects with foreign researchers and participation in international research mobilities. Importantly, these expectations are operationalized through doctoral school regulations requiring minimum publication standards for thesis defense, including publications indexed in Web of Science, Scopus or PsycINFO and, for certain cohorts, at least one article published or accepted in a Web of Science journal with impact factor. The panel considers that scientific dissemination and international visibility are therefore integrated directly and verifiably into the doctoral training pathway.

The capitalization and dissemination of research results are additionally supported through the editorial and research infrastructure associated with the domain. A relevant example is the Journal of Evidence-Based Psychotherapies, an internationally oriented scientific journal affiliated with the academic environment of the doctoral domain and contributing to the dissemination of research results according to international scientific standards. The evaluation panel also noted the existence of institutional monitoring mechanisms for scientific output and research performance, allowing periodic evaluation and transparent reporting of scientific productivity at domain and doctoral school level.

The panel further noted the alignment of the doctoral domain with Open Science and research transparency practices, including institutional engagement with international initiatives such as the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA), supporting responsible research evaluation and internationally recognized standards of scientific quality and impact.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain demonstrates a highly productive and internationally visible research environment, integrating publication requirements, international collaboration and research dissemination directly into doctoral training and scientific evaluation processes.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

DOMAIN C. Quality management

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

Standard S.C.1.1. Application

Adequately implemented strategic directions, actions, and procedures

Indicator I.P.C.1.1.1	The organisational component consistently carries out actions and applies procedures, proving their impact on improving the quality of education at the level of the study programme
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Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the doctoral study domain Psychology consistently

implements quality assurance procedures and improvement mechanisms integrated within the institutional quality management system of Babeş-Bolyai University and IOSUD-UBB.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that quality assurance processes are coordinated through institutional structures dedicated to academic quality management, including the Qualitas Center, which supports the development, monitoring and evaluation of quality assurance policies and procedures at university level. The doctoral domain applies periodic monitoring and evaluation mechanisms concerning doctoral supervision, research activity, academic performance, doctoral students' progression and institutional procedures.

The documentation and discussions during the evaluation visit confirmed the use of internal evaluation procedures, feedback mechanisms, performance monitoring and periodic review processes aimed at improving the quality of doctoral education and research activities. The panel also noted that the doctoral domain integrates quality assurance practices within a broader research-intensive academic culture emphasizing scientific performance, international visibility and continuous institutional development.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain benefits from an integrated institutional quality assurance framework supported by specialized university structures and continuous monitoring mechanisms focused on improving doctoral education and research quality.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

Standard S.C.1.2. Stakeholder engagement

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

Indicator I.P.C.1.2.1	The opinions of the members of its own community and of other stakeholders are taken into account in the procedure implementation process.
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Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the doctoral study domain Psychology incorporates feedback from members of the academic community and relevant stakeholders within the implementation and review of quality assurance procedures and academic activities.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that doctoral students participate in quality assurance and institutional feedback processes through formal evaluation procedures and representation within doctoral school governance structures. Teaching activities are evaluated by doctoral students on a semester basis through specific institutional procedures implemented via the AcademicInfo online platform. The collected feedback is analyzed institutionally, and annual reports are prepared by the Quality Commission (CQ), supporting the use of evaluation results for the improvement of academic activities and educational quality.

The panel also noted that stakeholder perspectives are integrated through institutional consultation mechanisms involving doctoral students, academic staff and external collaborators, contributing to the continuous development of doctoral education and research activities.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain integrates systematic digital feedback collection and institutional quality monitoring mechanisms supporting evidence-based improvement of doctoral education activities.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

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

Standard S.C.2.2. Operation

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

Indicator I.P.C.2.2.2.	The academic ethics commission operates based on the regulation approved by the University Senate, and performs actions that are compliant with the law, independently from any other structure or person in the higher education institution.
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Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that academic ethics activities within Babeş-Bolyai University and the doctoral study domain Psychology are regulated and implemented in accordance with national legislation and institutional regulations. The Ethics Commission operates independently, based on regulations approved by the University Senate and in compliance with Order no. 6869/30.09.2024.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that the University Ethics Commission functions according to the Regulation for the Organization and Functioning of the Ethics Commission of Babeş-Bolyai University, which establishes its responsibilities, operational procedures and institutional independence. The commission carries out ethics-related activities in accordance with legal requirements and independently from other university structures or decision-making bodies.

The panel also noted that the composition of the Ethics Commission includes student representation of at least 25%, supporting participatory governance and transparency in academic ethics processes.

Institutional procedures regarding academic integrity, ethics evaluation and the prevention of academic misconduct are publicly regulated and integrated within the broader quality assurance framework of the university.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain benefits from a clearly regulated and institutionally independent ethics framework integrating student representation and formal academic integrity procedures.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

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

Standard S.C.3.1. Procedures and implementation of procedures
The HEI has procedures for initiating, monitoring, and periodically reviewing the study programmes and domains and the performed activities, and applies them systematically.

Indicator I.P.C.3.1.1	The organisational component consistently applies the procedures, and proves their impact on quality assurance.
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Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that the doctoral study domain Psychology consistently applies institutional quality assurance procedures integrated within the quality management system of Babeş-Bolyai University and IOSUD-UBB.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that quality assurance procedures are systematically implemented through periodic evaluation, feedback collection, monitoring of doctoral activity and institutional review mechanisms. The documentation and discussions during the evaluation visit confirmed that these procedures support the continuous improvement of doctoral education, research activity and academic management processes.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain benefits from coherent and continuously applied quality assurance procedures integrated within the institutional quality management framework of the university.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

Indicator I.P.C.3.1.2	Members of its own community and other stakeholders are involved in the procedure implementation process.
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Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that members of the academic community and relevant

stakeholders are involved in the implementation of quality assurance procedures within the doctoral study domain Psychology.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that doctoral students, academic staff and institutional management representatives participate in evaluation, feedback and quality assurance processes through formal consultation mechanisms, representation in governance structures and periodic academic evaluations. External stakeholders are also involved through collaborative academic and research activities supporting the continuous improvement of doctoral education and research quality.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain promotes participatory quality assurance processes involving doctoral students, academic staff and external stakeholders in academic evaluation and institutional development activities.

Recommendation: -

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

Findings

The doctoral study domain Psychology provides fair and inclusive opportunities for doctoral students, taking into account their research interests, academic potential and individual learning needs. Doctoral supervision is individualized and adapted to the specific profile and research trajectory of each doctoral candidate.

The evaluation panel verified that doctoral students benefit from equal access to research infrastructure, digital resources, mobility programmes, conferences and institutional support services. The university also implements institutional policies regarding equal opportunities, non-discrimination and gender equality, reflected in the Gender Equality Plan adopted at university level.

Students with disabilities benefit from accessibility measures and support services, while hybrid and online academic platforms facilitate flexible participation in educational and research activities.

Analysis

The evaluation panel concludes that the doctoral study domain Psychology ensures equitable access to academic, research and mobility opportunities, while supporting diversity, inclusion and individualized doctoral development.

Good practices

- individualized doctoral supervision and flexible research pathways;
- implementation of institutional policies regarding equal opportunities and gender equality;
- accessible and inclusive academic environment supported through digital and hybrid infrastructure.

Recommendation:

The indicator is considered **fulfilled**.

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

Standard S.C.4.1. Procedures	
Applying the methodologies and procedures contributes to improving the quality of the staff's activities.	
Indicator I.P.C.4.1.1	The organisational component analyses the results of the students' biannual evaluation of teachers.

Findings:

The documentation analyzed indicates that Babeş-Bolyai University and the doctoral study domain Psychology systematically analyze the results of students' evaluations of teaching activities through institutional quality assurance procedures coordinated at university level.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that the evaluation of teaching activities by doctoral students is conducted biannually through the AcademicInfo online platform, in accordance with institutional procedures. The collected feedback is analyzed within the institutional quality assurance framework coordinated by the Qualitas Center and the Quality Commission (CQ), which prepare periodic reports regarding the evaluation results. The panel noted that these mechanisms support the monitoring and continuous improvement of teaching quality and doctoral training activities.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain benefits from systematic digital evaluation and institutional quality monitoring mechanisms coordinated through specialized university quality assurance structures.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

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

Standard S.C.5.1. Databases

The HEI uses databases to support internal quality assurance activities.

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

The organisational component systematically collects and analyses data required for the internal quality assurance process through integrated digital platforms and institutional information systems. Academic and administrative activities are supported by three integrated IT systems developed within the Centre for Information Systems. Administrative departments use the ManageAsist application, faculty secretariats operate through the AcademicInfo platform, and academic staff and researchers use the UBB Academic/Scientific Activity Management system for recording professional results and research activities.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that the integrated digital infrastructure allows the systematic collection, monitoring and analysis of academic, administrative and quality assurance data. The AcademicInfo platform supports the management of students' academic records and online course evaluations, while the institutional systems facilitate evidence-based decision-making and continuous quality improvement processes.

Good practices:

The use of integrated institutional digital platforms that centralize academic, administrative and research-related information contributes to efficient quality assurance management and data transparency.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

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

Standard S.C.6.1. Transparency

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

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

The organisational component ensures the publication and accessibility of information of public interest regarding the evaluated study programme through multiple institutional communication channels. Within UBB, public information is disseminated through official statements of the university spokesperson, press releases issued by the Directorate for Communication and Public Relations, press conferences, information boards located in university buildings, the institutional website, social media accounts (Facebook, X, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram etc.), faculty websites, and admission brochures for bachelor's and master's programmes.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel observed that the university ensures transparent and diversified communication with stakeholders by using both digital and traditional dissemination channels. Information concerning the study programme, admission procedures, academic regulations, student services, and institutional activities is publicly accessible and regularly updated, facilitating informed access for prospective students, current students, graduates and other interested parties.

Good practices:

The integrated use of institutional websites, social media platforms and admission materials contributes to increased visibility, transparency and accessibility of information related to the study programme.

Recommendation:

It is recommended to maintain the regular updating of online information and to continue diversifying digital communication methods targeting prospective international and minority-language students.

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

Indicator I.P.C.6.1.2	The organisational component ensures transparent decision-making processes.
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Findings:

The organisational component ensures transparent decision-making processes through institutional regulations, participatory governance structures and public communication mechanisms. Relevant institutional decisions, regulations and procedures are communicated through dedicated university platforms, including the InfoUBB system and the institutional website.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that decision-making processes within the university and the doctoral study domain are supported by formal governance structures involving academic staff and student representatives. Institutional regulations, Senate decisions, administrative procedures and information relevant to the academic community are publicly communicated through digital institutional platforms and official communication channels. The InfoUBB platform contributes to institutional transparency by facilitating access to academic and administrative information for members of the university community.

Good practices:

The use of integrated institutional communication platforms and participatory governance mechanisms supports transparency and accessibility of institutional decision-making processes.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

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

Standard S.C.8.1. Compliance with the external evaluation obligation The HEI undergoes external quality evaluation as required by the law.	
Indicator I.P.C.8.1.1	The organisational component carries out the procedures pertaining to the external quality evaluation process, aiming to organise the evaluated study programme as provided by the law.

Findings:

The organisational component carries out the procedures pertaining to external quality evaluation processes in accordance with national legislation and international quality assurance standards. Babeş-Bolyai University demonstrates a long-standing institutional commitment to external evaluation, international benchmarking and continuous quality improvement.

Analysis:

The evaluation panel noted that UBB was the first Romanian university to undergo evaluation by several international organizations and quality assurance bodies, including the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (2000), the Salzburg Seminar (2002) and the European University Association (EUA) in 2001 and 2012. These evaluations contributed to the development of institutional quality assurance mechanisms and international academic visibility.

The panel also noted the university's strong performance in international institutional evaluations. In 2018, UBB obtained the QS Stars four-star distinction following an international academic audit, corresponding

to the status of an international university of excellence. In 2021, following an extensive Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) audit focused also on institutional quality assurance processes, UBB became the first Romanian university awarded the five-star QS Stars distinction. This status was reconfirmed in 2025 with an improved institutional score.

In addition, in 2018 the university received the “HR Excellence in Research” distinction awarded by the European Commission for implementing the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. The university is currently engaged in the renewal process of this distinction.

At national level, UBB has undergone periodic institutional evaluations conducted by ARACIS, obtaining the qualification “High Degree of Confidence” in 2009, 2014 and 2020. The university also regularly submits study programmes and domains to ARACIS evaluation procedures for authorization, accreditation and reaccreditation purposes.

The doctoral study domain Psychology was externally evaluated by ARACIS during the period 02–05.11.2021 within the national periodic evaluation process for doctoral domains, maintaining its accreditation according to ARACIS Council Decision no. 132/16.12.2021. The evaluation panel considers that the organisational component demonstrates a mature quality assurance culture strongly oriented toward external evaluation, international standards and continuous institutional development.

Good practices:

The doctoral domain operates within a university characterized by sustained participation in international and national external evaluation processes, supporting a strong institutional quality culture and international academic credibility.

Recommendation: -

The indicator is: **Fulfilled**

IV. SWOT Analysis

The doctoral domain Psychology at Babeş-Bolyai University represents the largest and most internationally visible doctoral psychology ecosystem in Romania, integrating two highly productive doctoral schools (PCA and PIPVS). • Strong research culture supported by more than 700 scientific publications and over 71 national and international research projects during the last five academic years. • Highly competitive and internationally recognized doctoral supervisors, with strong scientometric profiles, international collaborations and substantial grant activity. • Advanced research infrastructure, including VR platforms, robototherapy	INTERNAL FACTORS ①	Weaknesses: • The operationalization of intended learning outcomes is only partially aligned with the updated ARACIS standards and with contemporary European competence-based qualification frameworks. • Uneven distribution of doctoral students among doctoral supervisors in certain cases may create differences in supervision workload and mentoring capacity. • The predictability and sustainability of national research funding in Romania continue to represent a structural vulnerability affecting long-term research planning and doctoral research development. • Increasing administrative and reporting requirements
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laboratories, neuroimaging facilities (BRAINQ), EEG/fNIRS systems, eye-tracking technologies and specialized thematic laboratories. • Strong internationalization profile supported by EUTOPIA membership, high doctoral student mobility rates, international conferences and participation of foreign experts in doctoral supervision and evaluation. • Robust institutional quality assurance framework and strong integration within UBB's internationally recognized quality culture (QS Stars 5*, HR Excellence in Research, EUA evaluations). • Strong integration of research-based learning within doctoral training through structured individual research programs and publication-oriented doctoral progression. • Extensive digitalization of academic and administrative processes through integrated institutional platforms and research management systems.		associated with doctoral education and research projects may place additional pressure on academic staff and doctoral supervisors..
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SWOT analysis

Opportunities: • Further alignment with European doctoral education frameworks, Open Science practices and responsible research assessment initiatives (e.g., CoARA). • Expansion of international cotutelle agreements, joint doctoral supervision and collaborative doctoral research projects within European university alliances and international research networks.	EXTERNAL FACTORS	Threats: • National demographic decline and increasing international competition for highly qualified doctoral candidates and early-career researchers. • Persistent instability and underfunding of the national research and higher education system may affect long-term institutional sustainability and research competitiveness. • Brain drain and migration of highly qualified researchers toward better funded
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• Increasing visibility of Romanian psychological research through participation in international consortia, Horizon Europe projects and interdisciplinary research initiatives. • Further development of technology-assisted psychological research and interventions through existing advanced digital and neurocognitive infrastructure. • Growing international interest in evidence-based psychology, mental health research and digital mental health interventions, areas strongly represented within the doctoral domain. • Potential expansion of interdisciplinary doctoral training involving neuroscience, artificial intelligence, behavioral sciences and digital health.		international academic environments. • Increasing global competition in scientific publishing, research funding acquisition and international academic rankings. • Rapid technological and methodological changes requiring continuous adaptation of doctoral curricula, research infrastructure and academic competencies.
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V. Extent to which the standards and performance indicators are fulfilled, and recommendations

No.	Performance Indicator	Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF)	Recommendations
MAIN A. Institutional capacity			
1.	I.P.A.1.1.1 For delivering the study programme/domain, the HEI has adequate organisational components and an adequate management system, which operate based on methodologies, regulations and procedures that are periodically reviewed as required by law.	F	
2.	I.P.A.1.2.1 The opinions of the faculty and department members, of the subsidiary or extension and of other stakeholders are considered in the process of adopting and revising methodologies, regulations and implementation procedures.	F	
3.	I.P.A.2.1.1 The HEI legally owns venues for the related education, research and administrative processes, as well as for services for students, doctoral students	F	

No.	Performance Indicator	Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF)	Recommendations
	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.		
4.	I.P.A.2.2.1 The movable and immovable assets are properly maintained to ensure optimal conditions for studying, living and research, as well as for work.	F	
5.	I.P.A.3.1.1 The human resources of the organisational component are suitable to perform the activities pertaining to the evaluated study programme/domain. The teaching staff has the required qualifications and professional competences to teach the subject matters assigned to them in the job list.	F	
6.	I.P.A.3.1.2 The HEI ensures professional and personal development for its staff.	F	- Continue supporting international mobility, interdisciplinary collaboration and balanced academic workload distribution in order to strengthen the long-term sustainability and international competitiveness of the doctoral domain.
7.	I.P.A.3.2.1 Recruitment procedures comply with the provisions of the law, and are established and carried out transparently.	F	
8.	I.P.A.4.1.1 The organisational component uses IT tools in its own procedures, to improve access and provide good quality services for the members of its own community and the indirect beneficiaries of education.	F	
DOMAIN B. Educational efficacy			
9.	I.P.B.1.1.1 The study programme is developed and structured according to the expected learning outcomes, and organised based on transferable study credits. It includes all learning, teaching, practical training, research and evaluation experiences, which, together, lead to a higher education qualification.	F	
10.	I.P.B.2.1.2 The expected learning outcomes are correlated with the	F	

No.	Performance Indicator	Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF)	Recommendations
	competences required by those occupations, according to the occupational standards and/or the European Skills, Competences and Occupations (ESCO).		
11.	I.P.B.3.1.1 The organisational component ensures implementation of the student-centred learning in the curriculum and through the teaching strategies used in the learning and teaching activities and experiences.	F	
12.	I.P.B.3.1.2 The organisational component ensures opportunities for students to participate in academic mobility programmes organised in person and/or virtually.	F	
13.	I.P.B.3.2.1 The organisational component provides fair opportunities for students, in line with their potential and aspirations, taking into account the diversity of learning styles and abilities.	F	Given the uncertainty associated with public research funding, the doctoral school is encouraged to further continue and diversify its funding base by strengthening partnerships with private-sector and non-governmental organisations. Such collaborations could support competitive doctoral scholarships throughout the entire doctoral cycle while preserving academic independence and research integrity. In turn, doctoral research could provide scientifically grounded evidence, diagnostic assessments, and evidence-based intervention frameworks addressing topics of strategic relevance for organisational, institutional, and community development, thereby enhancing both the societal impact and the sustainability of doctoral education.
14.	I.P.B.4.1.1 The organisational component provides students, including those with special educational needs/disabilities, with access to resources and services designed to support the learning process, adequate for the individual learning needs, the study domain, the study cycle, and the form of organisation of the study programme.	F	

No.	Performance Indicator	Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF)	Recommendations
15.	I.P.B.5.1.1 Learning outcomes are adequately described, and they support understanding of the students' and teachers' expectations regarding the content of the subject matters in the curriculum.	F	
16.	I.P.B.5.1.2 Achievement of the learning outcomes is checked in ongoing examinations and study completion exams.	F	
17.	I.P.B.7.1.1 The organisational component applies the admission procedures.	F	
18.	I.P.B.7.1.2 Admission in higher education study programmes complies with the principles of fairness and equal opportunities, and with the establishing of support measures to ensure access of vulnerable groups at social and educational risk, including candidates with special educational needs and/or disabilities.	F	
19.	I.P.B.7.2.1 The organisational component applies the regulations concerning the students' professional activity.	F	
20.	I.P.B.8.1.1 The organisational component carries out international cooperation actions supporting mobility of the members of its own community and collaboration in academic and research activities.	F	
21.	I.P.B.9.1.1 Learning based on scientific investigation and research results support and are capitalised upon in achieving the learning outcomes envisaged through the study programme.	F	
22.	I.P.B.9.2.1 The results of scientific research are visible at national and international level in that scientific domain, and capitalised upon in an adequate manner.	F	
DOMAIN C. Quality management			
23.	I.P.C.1.1.1 The organisational component consistently applies the procedures, and proves their impact on quality assurance.	F	
24.	I.P.C.1.2.1 The opinions of the members of its own community and of other stakeholders are taken into account in the procedure implementation process.	F	
25.	I.P.C.2.2.2. The academic ethics commission operates based on the	F	

No.	Performance Indicator	Extent to which it was fulfilled (F/PF/UF)	Recommendations
	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.		
26.	I.P.C.3.1.1 The organisational component consistently applies the procedures, and proves their impact on quality assurance.	F	
27.	I.P.C.3.1.2 Members of its own community and other stakeholders are involved in the procedure implementation process.	F	
28.	I.P.C.4.1.1 The organisational component analyses the results of the students' biannual evaluation of teachers.	F	
29.	I.P.C.5.1.1 The organisational component systematically collects and analyses data required for the internal quality assurance process.	F	
30.	I.P.C.6.1.1 The organisational component ensures publication and access to information of public interest regarding the evaluated study programme.	F	It is recommended to maintain the regular updating of online information and to continue diversifying digital communication methods targeting prospective international and minority-language students.
31.	I.P.C.6.1.2 The organisational component ensures transparent decision-making processes.	F	
32.	I.P.C.8.1.1 The organisational component carries out the procedures pertaining to the external quality evaluation process, aiming to organise the evaluated study programme as provided by the law.	F	

Summary Table of Performance Indicators – Degree of Fulfillment

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

– continuation of efforts to consolidate the doctoral supervision capacity through the attraction and affiliation of new high-performing doctoral supervisors, in line with the strategic development objectives of the doctoral domain and the growing complexity of doctoral research activities;

- continued support for increasing the international visibility and scientific competitiveness of doctoral research in Psychology through participation in international projects, WoS-indexed publications, international mobility and collaborative scientific networks;
- continued efforts to ensure a more balanced distribution of doctoral students among doctoral supervisors, in line with long-term sustainability and mentorship quality objectives;
- diversification of external funding sources supporting doctoral research, advanced research infrastructure, mobility and scientific dissemination activities, in the context of the continuing unpredictability of national research funding mechanisms;
- continued development of advanced methodological, interdisciplinary, digital, neurocognitive and AI-supported research competencies within the doctoral curriculum;
- maintaining the strong quality assurance mechanisms, internationalization activities and periodic curriculum revision processes already implemented within the two doctoral schools (PCA and PIPVS) composing the doctoral domain Psychology.

All analysed performance indicators were assessed as fulfilled. The evaluation panel concludes that the doctoral study domain Psychology within IOSUD – Babeş-Bolyai University meets the ARACIS standards and performance indicators applicable to the maintenance of accreditation procedure.

VI. Conclusions

The evaluation panel identified a highly developed doctoral environment, characterized by a strong institutional framework, an advanced research infrastructure and a research-intensive academic culture with significant national and international visibility. The doctoral study domain Psychology within IOSUD – Babeş-Bolyai University integrates two complex and complementary doctoral schools (PCA and PIPVS), which together support one of the most competitive doctoral ecosystems in Psychology in Romania. The doctoral domain demonstrates strong compliance with ARACIS standards, national regulations and relevant European academic benchmarks, while promoting research-based learning, international collaboration, advanced methodological training and student-centred doctoral education. The evaluation confirmed the existence of highly qualified doctoral supervisors, substantial scientific productivity, extensive international collaboration activities and strong integration of doctoral students within competitive research environments.

The analysis of the Internal Evaluation Report, the supporting documentation and the discussions conducted during the evaluation visit confirms the academic maturity, institutional coherence and strong international orientation of the doctoral domain, as well as its continuous commitment to quality assurance, scientific excellence and innovation in doctoral training and research.

Based on the overall evaluation results, the panel proposes:

- maintaining accreditation (MAC) of the doctoral study domain Psychology within IOSUD – Babeş-Bolyai University.

The proposal is supported by the fact that 32 (all) analyzed performance indicators were assessed as fulfilled.

VII. Annexes

Enclose the schedule of the on-site visit.