

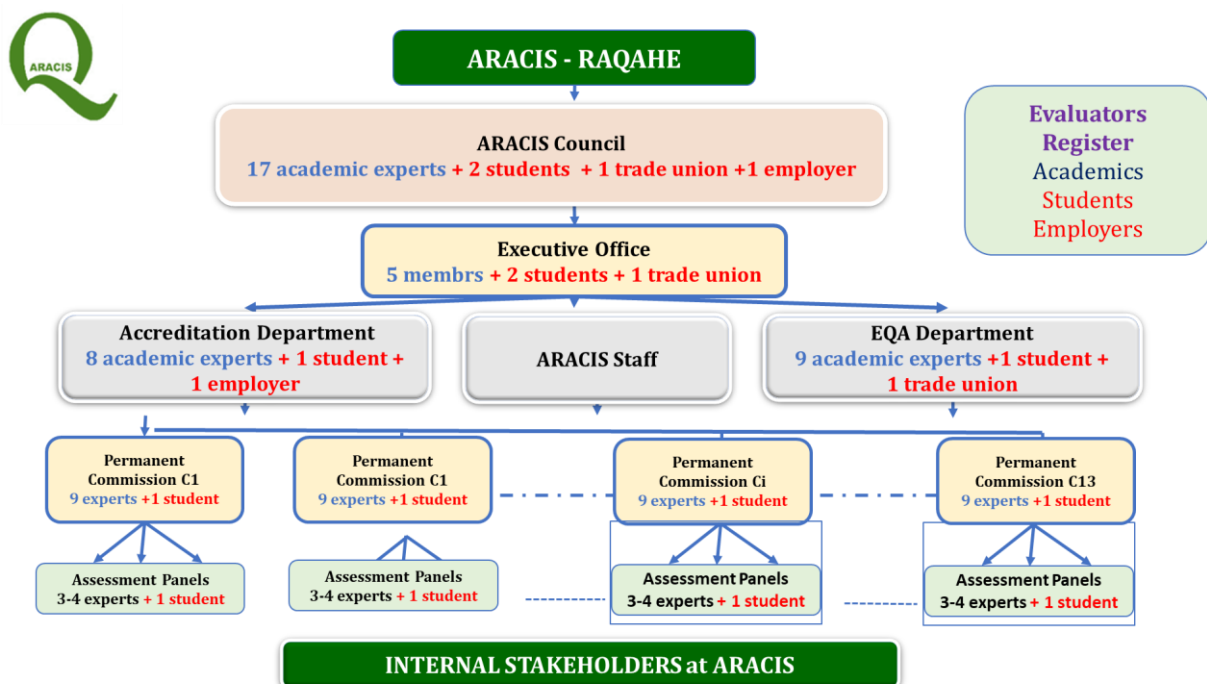
## A short description of the responsibilities and structure of The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education is known by the Romanian acronym ARACIS which stands (in Romanian) for „**Agenția Română pentru Asigurarea Calității în Învățământul Superior**”, referred to thereafter as **ARACIS / the Agency**. The Agency started to function in 2005, being instituted by Law. According to the Law – Art.16 (1), “ARACIS is an autonomous public institution of national interest, a legal entity with own income and expenses budget”.

At present, the Agency is led by a Council of 21 members. Rectors and any other persons holding high official positions within the Presidency, the Government or the Parliament cannot be members of the Council of ARACIS, in order to ensure complete independence and to avoid political influence.

By Law, five of the Council members are Executive Board members, which is the structure that has to ensure the day-to-day management routine of the Agency. Two of the five members of the Executive Board, the President of the Council and the Vice-president, are elected by their peers via a secret voting procedure. The other three members of the Board are appointed by the President and serve as Directors of Departments (Accreditation and External Quality Evaluation, respectively) and Secretary General. The present organizational structure of the agency is given in Figure 1.

Figure 1



The importance of ARACIS, as an institution and activities, in the Romanian normative HE context, is probably better underlined by quoting the Law - Art. 17 (1), b): “to assess based on standards and methodology approved by Government Decisions, upon request or of its own



initiative, and to propose the authorization, respectively the accreditation of higher education providers and their study programs. On the basis of the accreditation reports, the Ministry of Education and Research elaborates the normative acts for the establishment of higher education structures”.

The QA external evaluation activities of the agency are summarized in Table 1 below.

**Table 1**

QA external evaluation activities of the agency: synopsis		
Type of external evaluation	Activity	Comments
<b>1. Provisional authorizing to operate</b>	1.1 Study programs (SPs) (Bachelor/"Licență") 1.2 HE institutions	<b>Performed on a regular basis,</b> as per legal provisions
<b>2. Accreditation</b>	2.1 Study programs (Bachelor/"Licență"; Master) 2.2 HE institutions 2.3 Master studies domains 2.4 Doctoral study domains 2.5 Institution Organising Doctoral University Studies (IOSUD)	
<b>3. Periodic (cyclical) evaluation</b>	3.1 Study programs (Bachelor/"Licență"; Master) 3.2 HE institutions 3.3 Master studies domains 3.4 Doctoral study domains 3.5 Institution Organising Doctoral University Studies (IOSUD)	
4. EUR-ACE Label Awarding	4. Evaluation of Engineering Study Programs	<i>Occasional activity</i> , upon request/contract with Romanian HEIs. EUR-ACE Label awarded by ARACIS, according to agreement with ENAEE
5. International/cross-border evaluation	5. Evaluation of 17 Law Study Programs in R. of Moldova	<i>Occasional activity</i> performed in R. of Moldova, upon request/contract based. ARACIS evaluation considered also provisions of legislation in the country where the study programs were offered. Note: based on ARACIS Report Accreditation/Reaccreditation was granted as per foreign partner country legislation

An important activity of the agency, with significant relevance for the HEIs and the stakeholders is, since 2009, drafting and publishing system-wide and thematic analyzes. Several such documents, under the title “Quality Barometer”, were published in 2009 and 2010. The most recent issue was published in Romanian in 2015 and was translated in English in 2016<sup>1</sup>. In accordance with the ESG 2015, the Quality Barometer includes a thematic analysis on the perception of ARACIS activity with the stakeholders.

Other activity at national level include: drafting proposals for adapting methodologies to new requirements of the Law of national education - 2011; co-operation with the National Authority for Qualifications (ANC) and the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-University

<sup>1</sup> Quality Barometer 2016: [http://www.aracis.ro/fileadmin/ARACIS/Publicatii\\_Aracis/2017/Quality\\_Barometer\\_2016\\_EN.rar](http://www.aracis.ro/fileadmin/ARACIS/Publicatii_Aracis/2017/Quality_Barometer_2016_EN.rar)



Education (ARACIP), co-operation with the National Rector's Council, with HE institutions, student federations and community of employers.

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