

# LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia



Approved with the amendments

## Quality Assurance Manual

Gori,

2021

## 1. Introduction

1.1. This document is a Quality Assurance Manual of the LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia of Georgia (hereinafter - the Academy). It provides information about the Quality Assurance System of the Academy, the basic principles, standards, and procedures that determine and ensure the quality of academic/military education programmes implemented at the Academy.

1.2. The principal purpose of the Quality Assurance System Manual is to provide all stakeholders with information on the Academy's Quality Assurance System standards, mechanisms, and procedures so that they can be interpreted and understood equally by all stakeholders. Also, to ensure transparency of the information and procedures, openness, reliability, and involvement of all stakeholders in quality assurance procedures, which in turn is the basis of Total Quality Management.

1.3 The proper operating of the Quality Assurance System is significant for the Academy because to fulfill its Mission and the educational programmes it implements, it must ensure a high quality of teaching and learning to prepare high-standard officers for the service of the country. The challenges facing the country increase the demand for skills and competencies of trainees and Junkers and require the training of highly qualified specialists in line with international standards.

1.4. Academic Higher Educational Programs are implemented in the Academy following the requirements set by the state in the higher education system and the challenges faced

by the Georgian Defence Forces. The education system of the Ministry of Defence is part of the unified national education system, taking into account the specifics of the Ministry's military and civilian service. The Ministry of Defence of Georgia (hereinafter referred to as the Ministry) is the principal client of the educational programmes and the employer of the graduates. The programmes consider the education requirements, interests and priorities of Ministry, which is the reason for offering academic educational programmes.

1.5 Gradual military training programmes for officers are planned and implemented according to the requirements of the Georgian Defence Forces and aim to provide/enhance the education of military service-men and civilians per their service duties, specifics and responsibilities.

1.6 The basic principles, standards, and procedures of the quality assurance provided in this document are used in both face-to-face and e-learning.

## **2. The Quality Assurance Service of the Academy**

2.1. Quality assurance in the Academy has the following goals:

- Continuous improvement of the teaching, learning, research and management quality;
- Realization of opportunities for Junkers, trainees, academic and invited staff, teachers and instructors (hereinafter teachers);
- To facilitate the process of creating an optimal learning environment;
- To contribute to the creation of an education-based society.

**2.2.** The basis of the quality assurance activities are two equally important goals: evaluation/reporting and development. Successful Quality Assurance Service provides stakeholders with information on the quality of activities (evaluation/reporting). At the same time provides them with advice and recommendations on how to improve (develop) activities of the institution. Thus, quality assurance and quality improvement are interrelated, and quality assurance and development activities contribute to the establishment of the institution's Quality Culture, involving all stakeholders: Junkers, trainees, academic and invited staff, teachers, instructors, supervisors, etc.

The term "quality assurance" used in this document describes a recurring cycle of quality assurance and development (activities required for quality assurance and development).

### **2.3. Method**

The Quality Assurance System is based on the PDCA cycle. The PDCA cycle is a four-step model used to control, modify, and continuously improve processes and products: P - plan ; D - do; C - check; A - act.



Quality assurance in the educational context aims to sustain and improve high standards of teaching, assessment, and research by academic and invited staff, teachers, and instructors. The Quality Assurance Service achieves this by evaluating/monitoring the learning process, for which established quality assurance mechanisms are used. Quality evaluation is also carried out through external evaluation mechanisms.

- The Quality Assurance System is based on the idea of a self-critical community where employees are actively involved in quality assurance and development processes.
- Teachers' self-evaluation helps maintain high standards of teaching and research through their (teachers') academic freedom, self-regulation, and personal responsibility. The purpose of evaluating the learning process and research work through quality assurance mechanisms is to support and reinforce their best aspirations, desires, and efforts to develop and enhance their existing knowledge and skills and thus improve the outcomes of their teaching and research work.

### **3. Quality Assurance Internal and External Mechanisms**

The quality assurance in the Academy is carried out by internal and external mechanisms.

#### **3.1. Internal Quality Assurance**

3.1.1. Quality assurance through internal mechanisms is carried out by the Quality Assurance Service of the Academy with the involvement of stakeholders.

3.1.2. The Quality Assurance Service for quality assurance and development is governed by the Law of Georgia on Higher Education, by-laws, relevant orders approved by the Minister of Defence of Georgia, the Statute of the Academy and other regulatory documents. It uses authorization and accreditation guidelines, quality assurance doctrines of US Defence Forces training programmes, and other regulatory documents and standards. It also shares European Higher Education Area Quality Assurance Standards and Guidelines (ESG) for the internal quality assurance.

3.1.3. The functions, duties and responsibilities of the Quality Assurance Service are regulated by the Provision of the Quality Assurance Service.

3.1.4. To achieve the mission and goals of the National Defence Academy and improve the quality of education, the Quality Assurance Service regularly conducts evaluation of educational and research activities. Internal quality assurance mechanisms are described (but not limited to) in this document. The quality assurance may require the use of other mechanisms to be agreed upon with the Rector, Vice-Rectors, and the Academic Council of the Academy; 3.1.5. The principal functions of internal quality assurance are:

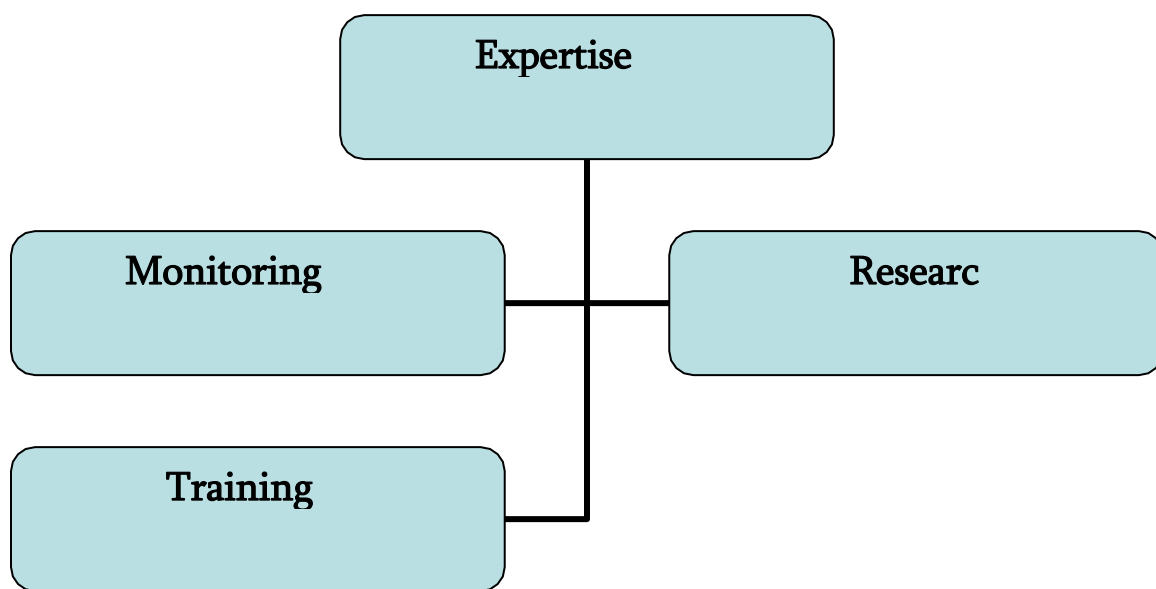
a) Educational and scientific research work, regular evaluation of the quality

of professional development of its staff, in which the Junkers/trainees should also participate and the results of which should be public and accessible to all stakeholders;

b) Establishing relations and cooperation with foreign countries and their higher education institutions to establish transparent quality control criteria and their methodology;

c) Introducing modern teaching, learning and assessment methods (modules, credit system, etc.), preparing self-assessment reports for the authorization/accreditation process.

3.1.6. Quality assurance in the Academy works in the following directions:



### 3.1.7. Development and Approval of the Educational Programme

For academic educational programmes, the following document has been developed in the Academy: "The rule of analysis, planning, development, improvement, implementation, evaluation and approval of academic educational programmes", which is accompanied by an appendix for the preparation and presentation of the educational programme (curriculum),

instructions for submission and the recommended (unified) form of the course syllabus, and the appendices required for the evaluation of learning outcomes:

- Map of programme goals and learning outcomes;
- Programme learning outcome evaluation plan/Curriculum Map;
- Programme learning outcomes evaluation rubrics;
- Map of teaching and learning methods compliance with learning outcomes;

Military educational programmes are presented following the "Standards of Educational Programmes in Military Higher Education and Military Training Institutions of the Ministry of Defence of Georgia". The educational programme is reviewed by the Board of the relevant educational unit (Undergraduate/Graduate) and approved by the Academic Council upon the recommendation of the Quality Assurance Service.

### **3.1.8. Educational Programme Implementation Administration**

Administration of educational programmes within the scope of competence is provided by the Civil / Military Direction Training Department and Examination Center of the G-3 / G-2 Service of the Academy Staff;

Examination Center of the G-3 / G-2 Service of the Academy Staff; Civil / Military Direction Training Unit of the G-3 / G-2 Service of the Academy Staff according to its functions:

- Develops a plan-calendar for academic programmes and agrees on a military training calendar;
- In the case of overlap of resources, venues, activities (including exams, field trips, practical training), and approved teachers/instructors' workload in other programme's calendars, the Civil/Military Direction Training Unit of the G-3 / G-2 Service of the Staff requests to make changes in the calendar or training schedule submitted for



approval based on the recommendations offered by it.

- Controls the organizational support for the implementation of the learning process;
- Facilitates the conduct of the midterm and final examinations within the scope of competence and analyzes the assessments of Junkers/trainees;
- Prepares Diplomas, Diploma Supplements, Certificates, and Notices on Academic Achievement;
- For the control of the annual or semester workload of the academic staff, teachers, instructors, and invited specialists with relevant qualifications, authorized to request the submission of documentation and reports reflecting their activities;
- To monitor the work of the laboratories of the Academy, it is authorized to request the submission of documents and reports reflecting their activities;

#### **Examination Center:**

Ensures the establishment of a bank of exam questions and other examination materials and its uploading in the examination database together with the staff implementing training courses for the Graduate / Undergraduate studies / Junior Officers' Training School;

Ensures the midterm and final exams; prepares exam papers and summaries of academic performance data;

Calculates the rating of Junkers/listeners, for which is authorized to request the submission of relevant data. In the format of e-learning, the Examination Center develops appropriate regulations and, if required, implements mixed/hybrid training courses.

#### **3.1.9. Monitoring and Development**

The educational performance appraisal system is a set

of internal evaluation mechanisms for teaching and research activities aimed improving the quality of the educational process, establishing systematic self-assessment and quality assurance mechanisms.

The Quality Assurance Service using quality assurance mechanisms/instruments, regularly carries out evaluation of the educational and scientific research work of the Academy, evaluates the quality of professional development of the staff, monitors the implementation of educational programmes. As a result, it develops proposals and recommendations for improvement of teaching and research work, educational programs teaching forms and their structure, for raising the qualification of academic staff.

The Quality Assurance Service conducts meetings as needed, to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

The Quality Assurance Service of the Academy and the persons involved in the development of the program are entitled to arrange syllabi and educational programmes, as they are constantly in need of development and improvement (internal quality assurance is an ongoing process, what all parties are aware of). The Quality Assurance Service carries out technical monitoring and academic examination of educational programmes annually.

The Quality Assurance Service annually reviews the quality assurance tools / mechanisms, analyzes and, if required, implements more efficient mechanisms.

The Quality Assurance Service monitors online lectures / seminars through an electronic platform, following the established distance learning rules.

### **3.1.10. Mechanism for stakeholder participation in the educational programme**

### **development process**

- The stakeholders in the development of educational programs are employers, persons involved in the implementation of the programme (academic, invited staff, teachers, military instructors), Junkers/trainees, graduates;
- The Quality Assurance Service ensures the involvement of stakeholders in the programme development process through educational programmes and scientific research work evaluation mechanisms.
- The Direction/Program heads should also ensure the involvement of stakeholders in the programme development process;
- The results obtained through educational programmes and scientific research work evaluation mechanisms give an overview of the general situation to the direction/programme leaders and show the relevant directions, to better plan the learning process, consider the demands of the labor market and the Junkers/trainees, graduates attitude, recommendations/desires for the programme improvement.
- The Direction/program Head and the Quality Assurance Service, in agreement with the Academy Management, are authorized to invite external experts in the field to participate in the evaluation process of the educational programme.

#### **3.1.11 Mechanisms for evaluating educational programmes and scientific research work**

The purpose of the evaluation is to help improve the quality of education and not just to detect poor outcomes (achievements) and state them. Evaluation

should give impetus to progress; it should provide the desire and faith to lead the work of the educational institution

to the better performance. Such an evaluation system provides neither incentives nor penalties. The purpose of the evaluation is, first and foremost, to support academic / invited staff / teachers / instructors and Direction / program heads by ensuring them with the diverse, relevant and reliable information on the programme/training courses implementation outcomes. The results of the evaluation, as well as the methods used in this evaluation and materials, are accessible to the stakeholders. Outcomes should be envisaged when planning / implementing educational programmes and scientific research work. It also influences Academia's educational policy decisions and is actively used by teachers to refine/improve teaching methods. All this has the sole purpose of raising the quality of education in the Academy.

**3.1.12. The following mechanisms are used to evaluate the educational programme:**

- a). The involvement of employers and academic / invited staff / teachers / instructors, as well as other stakeholders (graduates, Junkers / trainees) in the programme evaluation is significant in shaping the learning outcomes of educational programmes. Through the internal quality assurance system, the Academy should receive feedback from the employment market on the relevance of the content of their programmes. Such feedback will be obtained as a result of the Satisfaction Survey of Graduates employed in the Georgian Defence Forces.
- b). External expertise/bench-marking is carried out by international experts and the mentioned conclusions are taken into account in the programme development or/and modification/improvement of the existing programme;

c). The Direction/program Head and the Quality Assurance Service, in agreement with the Academy Management, are authorized to invite external experts of the field to participate in the evaluation process of the educational programme.

### **3.1.13. Interviews**

- In order to evaluate the implementation of the programme, to determine the quality of the training process and the training courses implementation provided by the educational programmes, the Quality Assurance Service develops survey forms and carries out interviews of Junkers / trainees, academic / invited staff / teachers / instructors.
- Through survey/interviews it is possible to study the opinions and evaluations, expectations of persons involved in the implementation of the educational programme Junkers / trainees / academic / invited staff, / teachers / instructors and informing other stakeholders.
- Survey / interview usually is conducted at least once per semester during the implementation of the educational programme. Survey / interview of Junkers of the academic educational programme usually is conducted at least once per semester. The number of surveys can be increased if required. There should be a reasonable period of time between surveys. The survey is anonymous and it is necessary to protect confidentiality. The survey can be conducted in the form of electronic questionnaires (google forms), using the ILIAS platform or in material form, after which the data is processed.
- It is obvious that not all Junkers / trainees

will be completely satisfied with the work of some academic / invited staff / teacher / instructor, and it is possible that some of them evaluate the training course with low mark or make unethical comment. It is significant for the Academy to consider certain Junker's / trainee's personal opinion, and the Direction / programme head and the Quality Assurance Service will continue to study and analyze opinions and evaluations expressed. It is also clear that the low grade attested by some Junkers/trainees will not significantly change the teacher's evaluation (here is the average grade) when the rest of the Junkers/trainees rate the academic / invited staff / teacher / instructor with high marks. as the average score is calculated as the sum of the scores recorded by all Junkers/trainees divided by the number of respondents. But when a large group of Junkers/trainees rate a course with low scores and make unethical comments, obviously, their rating will impact the average score. And it will be a very significant concern for the academic / invited staff / instructor and the head of the Graduate/Undergraduate programme that the situation requires immediate intervention, attention and response.

- After analyzing the results of the survey/interview, the Quality Assurance Service provides results of analysis with recommendations to the heads of the Direction/programme, heads of basic education units, relevant structural units and other stakeholders, who determine the cause of the identified problem /deficiencies and establish mechanisms for improvement.
- If required, a meeting is held with the stakeholders to discuss the issues

identified in the analysis of the survey/interview results and the identified problem / deficiencies to get acquainted with their opinions regarding the reasons. Based on the information received after the meeting, the recommendations may change. In the case of recommendations change, the Quality Assurance Service will again send recommendations to all stakeholders for further response. The Quality Assurance Service the results of survey/interview analysis along with the recommendations submits to the Academic Council. Relevant structural units should also submit an action plan for further response and improvement of identified issues.

- Information about the survey results is also sent individually to the academic / invited staff / teachers / instructors conducting the training courses. If required, the results are discussed with them individually. After analyzing the received information, the academic / invited staff / teachers / instructors should send their opinion / feedback to the Quality Assurance Service about the received information and what actions they plan to take to improve the quality of the training course and teaching.
- The Academic Council of the Academy ensures the planning and implementation of relevant activities within the scope of authority granted by the legislation and the Statute of the Academy.
- If recommendations are shared by the Academic Council of the Academy, it becomes mandatory for implementation.

#### **3.1.14 Interviewing**

By the request of Junkers/trainees, academic/invited staff/teacher/ instructor, or by the decision of the Quality Assurance Service and Administration,

an interview with Junkers/trainees may be planned, which will be held without the presence of academic / invited staff/teacher/instructor.

The interview may take the following form: The interviewer divides the Junkers into small groups. Each group is given 10 minutes to elect a representative who will record their views and opinions. Groups are asked to comment on the following issues:

- To name the factors and aspects of the training course, which facilitated their learning;
- To name the factors and aspects of the training course, which hindered their learning, and which they wish to change;
- Their views, how it is possible to improve the training course by academic / invited staff / teacher / instructor, as well as Junkers/trainees;
- After the allotted time, the interviewer discusses with the groups the opinions they have recorded and writes them down. After the meeting, the interviewer summarizes the information received, separates the issues, in which all the groups agree with each other and highlights the differences between them. The received information then provided to the academic / invited staff / teacher / instructor in an individual consultation.

To improve the quality of the educational process, it is possible to plan Rector's, Vice-Rectors, Chief of Staff's, Head of Quality Assurance Service, Undergraduate/Graduate studies/School Head's /Commander's, Head's of Directions /Education Program's, Battalion Commander's meetings with Junkers/trainees.

### **3.1.15. Monitoring/observation of the educational process and educational**



### **programmes implementation**

Monitoring/observation the implementation of the educational process and educational programmes involves direct observation of the learning process both in the auditorium and online training, and receiving the feedback after it. Quality Assurance Service should appoint a tutor to academic / visiting staff, teachers, military instructors, regardless of their rank or position, at least once per year. For a highly qualified and skilled colleagues (usually from the list of observers), it's the usual procedure to be invited to observe the teaching process, peer review, which is governed by the appropriate instructions:

"Regulations for Evaluation and Examinations at the Academic Higher Education Level".

Two members of the observation group attend lectures / practical lessons for observation purpose, evaluate lessons, conduct study to determine the compliance of the current learning processes with the training courses syllabi.

After observing the lessons, the observation team analyzes the results and develops appropriate recommendations for the improvement of the educational programme or individual training course.

Member of the observation team may be Vice-Rector, Undergraduate / Graduate / School Head / Commander, the Head / employee of the Quality Assurance Service, officer of the Civil / Military Direction Training Department of the G-3 / G-2 Staff, Direction / Programme Head, as well as academic and invited staff, teacher and instructor, who have undergone relevant training in monitoring the implementation of the educational process

and educational programmes, know the observation procedure and evaluation criteria. The monitoring team member may also be an external international expert and, if required, an invited specialist.

### **3.1.16 Principles and Procedure**

- The purpose of observing the learning process is for the academic/invited staff/teachers/instructors to present themselves and demonstrate sufficient teaching skills;
- The learning process should be monitored in an open, transparent and collaborative

manner;

- Observation of the learning process will facilitate the transfer of successful practice through the sharing of experience and targeted support;
- This type of assessment contributes to the quality assurance system of the teaching but usually does not involve the accumulation of points in terms of performance appraisal.
- For all training courses and course implementers (academic/invited staff teachers/instructors), two observations are made by random selection as needed. Where a negative appraisal is made, support and follow-up will be provided;
- All members of the monitoring team will receive appropriate training to ensure the reliability and truthfulness of their appraisal. All teachers will be provided with feedback;
- All stakeholders and teachers will be aware of the observation process stages and all the documentation used in this process.
- Academic/invited staff will be informed in advance that it is planned to observe his lessons.
- The lesson will be monitored by 2 observers.
- Before the commencement of the lecture, Junkers/trainees will be informed about attendance of observer, whose function is to observe the teaching process (not the Junkers/trainees).
- During the training, the observer makes notes in a standard form and keeps records. The observers describe strengths of what they observed and those aspects of study, which require attention and share their opinion on how it can be improved - be it paying attention to them directly, or taking particular action.
- The monitoring report is signed by both members of the monitoring team and submitted to the Quality Assurance Service. A copy is sent to the teacher, in full confidentiality.
- Observation of a particular lesson or group can be conducted at the request of the teacher, in the case if the teacher requires qualified advice on or support in the particular issue.
- The observation report is provided to the appropriate academic / invited staff / teachers / instructors according to the principle of confidentiality. Academic / invited staff / teacher / instructor will learn about the appraisal of the observation team, expresses his/her views

in the observation feedback letter. He/she may disagree with the opinions of the observation group and provide the letter with confirming his position facts. Academic/invited staff / teachers / instructors may also request a second observation if: the teacher thinks that the previous lesson, which was observed, did not reflect the standards of the teacher's usual lesson;

- The teacher disagrees with the observers' evaluations.  
The following procedure applies in these cases:

#### **Case 1.**

1. Academic / invited staff / teacher / instructor will contact the Quality Assurance Service in writing for a reason to carry out additional monitoring within 5 working days upon receipt of a monitoring report.
2. The Quality Assurance Service reviews the written request and within 3 business day sets an additional monitoring date.
3. Additional monitoring will be performed by the same observers, and the additional evaluation report will have the same value as the previous one.

#### **Case 2.**

1. Academic / invited staff / teacher / instructor will contact the Quality Assurance Service in writing for a reason to carry out additional monitoring within 5 working days upon receipt of a monitoring report.
  2. The Quality Assurance Service reviews the written request and within 3 business day sets an additional monitoring date.
  3. Additional monitoring will be carried out again by two observers. One of them will be a member of the first monitoring team (selected randomly) and the second - new observer. Second, addition evaluation report will be the final evaluation.
- The training monitoring report and the peer evaluation protocol must be submitted to the Quality Assurance Service within a reasonable time but not earlier than the next working day of receiving the monitoring report and not later than the next 5 working

days .

- The Quality Assurance Service will introduce the report of the monitoring teams and the monitoring feedback letter to the Rector, Vice-Rectors, the Civil / Military Direction Training Unit G3 / G2 of the Staff, heads of the Undergraduate / Graduate / School primary education unit. If required, meetings will be held to discussing the issues raised and further improvement. Academic / invited staff / teachers / instructors can be invited to the meetings.

### **3.1.17. Junkers / Trainees Academic Achievement Analysis /Determining the degree of exams and tests complexity.**

One of the most important indicators of the educational process evaluation is the academic performance of the Junkers, and based on this analysis it is possible to obtain the following information:

- The degree of complexity of the educational programme and individual training courses;
- Adequacy of the methods used in the evaluation;
- The level of training of Junkers / trainees;
- The degree of complexity of exams and tests.

Knowledge of Junkers is evaluated by 100-point system. The final evaluation includes the midterm evaluations and evaluation of the final exam. Assessment in all courses is ongoing throughout the semester. Each form and component of the assessment has a percentage in the total assessment score (100 points). Consisting of various components, it enables for more accurate assessment of Junkers/trainees achievements. The final exam is mandatory.

In the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the distribution of credits between the various components should be based on a realistic assessment of the workload of the modest Junker, which

is required to achieve the learning outcome set for each component. The Junker / trainee ranking scale that developed in ECTS basically matches the Gaussian distribution (normal distribution). If the programme/training course prerequisites, complexity are well defined, properly planned and used adequate forms of assessment the Junker's / trainees assessment will be close to the Junker/trainee ranking scale: According to the ranking scale, the number of best Junkers/trainees (with the highest points) should not exceed 10% of the total number, and then by steps 25% -30% -25% -10% (See Figure 1). According to the ranking, the principal mass of Junkers/trainees must have average attendance, but very high and low points - Junkers/trainees is accordingly equal to 10–10%.

**Figure 1: Junker Ranking Scale in the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)**

Obviously, Junkers/trainees real redistribution by achievement does not always coincide with a given ranking scale. Differences at various levels of teaching, specifics of different subjects, the number of Junkers/trainees, their motivation and diligence, efforts made by the teacher, make certain corrections in this model of distribution. However, the ranking scale can be used as an indicator which we should compare the actual data for evaluating the training course, academic/invited staff/teacher/instructor and Junker/trainee.

<sup>1</sup> European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

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For example, if it turns out that the principal mass of Junkers/trainees in this or that training course gets higher than 91 points, then several types of conclusions can be made:

- ✓ The Junkers/trainees are "geniuses";
- ✓ The programme is very simple;
- ✓ Academic / invited staff / teacher / instructor are very liberal in assessing Junkers / trainees or using inadequate forms of assessment.

Also, if it turns out that the majority of Junkers / trainees during the semester receive only the highest marks in all courses, it means that the program is simple, and it is possible to ask about its complication, or it is necessary to redistribute the courses according to their complexity to balance the material to be mastered by the Junkers / trainees. On the contrary, if the Junkers / trainees' grades are low in all subjects, then it may be necessary to adapt the programme accordingly, including reviewing the prerequisites for admission to the programme.

It is also noteworthy to compare the evaluations of Junkers / trainees at various stages of appraisal: Compare the results of the current evaluation with the results of the next exam. For example - compare the results of the current 9-week appraisal with the midterm exam results and compare the results of the complete current assessment with the final exam results. The midterm and final exams summarize the knowledge gained during the pre-exam period and should reflect the work done by the Junker/trainee in the previous period, the learning outcomes evaluated by the academic / invited staff/teacher / instructor in the current assessment. Of course, there is a part of the Junkers/trainees, who work harder in preparation for the exams period and get better scores on the exam, then in the current assessments. There are also some Junkers/trainees who are either lazy or have a relatively low score on a test due to the stressful situation but, when the group has a high percentage

of grades A and B in the current grades and no grade A at all and a very low percentage of grade B on the exam, this signals problems in either the current assessments or the exam tests. A complex approach is very significant when processing academic performance data: It is possible to analyze the Junkers' attendance for one course, but for the overall picture it is necessary to compare the evaluations received by the same group of Junkers/trainees in various training courses during one semester, or comparative analysis of various groups/platoon by the same test/exam results.

It is also significant to process statistical data regularly for comparing the results of different academic years to make clear the effect of changes (or their absence) on the programme level or in the field of teaching and assessment. It is recommended that Junkers/trainees achievements analysis be conducted regularly at the end of each semester, and its results are discussed.

Following the analysis of academic performance outcomes, the Quality Assurance Service develops recommendations to eliminate or bring to a minimum the deficiencies occurring in the educational process.

**3.1.18 Statistical and qualitative analysis of exams and tests** It is significant that statistical and qualitative analysis be carried out by the course provider regarding the exams and tests.

#### Statistical Analysis

It is recommended to introduce it in its entirety, as well as in the reliability and accuracy of the individual test questions, in the complexity, difference (Discrimination index), etc.

#### Qualitative Analysis

Ambiguity, faulty questions, misinterpretation, existence of more than one correct answer in the case of a test question.

Statistical and qualitative analysis of examinations and tests should be provided by the G3 /

G2 Civil-Military Direction Training Service of the Staff to the Heads of the relevant Basic Education Unit, the Heads of the Direction/Program, and for further processing to the Quality Assurance Service. The information delivered by the Claims Commission also plays significant role in providing and processing this information.

**3.1.19. Determining the compliance of the core literature indicated in the syllabi of the training courses and the library book fund;**

- The Quality Assurance Service ensures the compliance of educational programmes, human resources and material-technical base with the standards of authorization and accreditation.
- The Quality Assurance Service regularly inspects the library to determine availability in the library of the core literature listed in the syllabi of the programme training courses and to make it accessible to Junkers / trainees; Compares the core literature of all the syllabi of the undergraduate / graduate education programmes to the library book and an electronic fund. The comparison results are sent by the Quality Assurance Service to the relevant structural units. In the case of deficiencies, the relevant services are obliged to ensure that the deficiency is eradicated.
- The Academy also provides training for library staff with both local resources and qualified external experts to ensure that their level of service meets the standards.
- Based on the analysis of the comparison results, it may be necessary for the Quality Assurance Service to make recommendations to the Academic Council to increase availability of the core literature of the undergraduate / graduate programme training courses in the library and accessibility for Junkers/trainees.

**3.1.20. Monitoring the IT infrastructure at the Academy and access to its administration.**

The Quality Assurance Service monitors the availability of information technology infrastructure and its administration. It is significant that the IT infrastructure is in line with



the current learning process at the Academy and ensures its efficient implementation. It is also significant to verify information technology risk management, ensure data protection and evaluate the effectiveness of the information system.

The Quality Assurance Service also checks the availability of information technology infrastructure for Junkers / trainees and academic / invited staff / teachers / instructors.

#### **3.1.21 Monitoring of the Academic Website.**

The Academy's website is constantly monitored by the Quality Assurance Service. It is significant that the information posted on the Website is consistent with applicable regulations and standards. In particular, to perform the communication and information function. Contact and other required information should be posted in Georgian and English, including the mission of the Academy, activities, structure, catalog of educational programmes, preconditions for admission to the programme, etc.

The regularity and reasonable time of updating the information posted on the website are also checked.

#### **3.1.22. Determining the compliance of material and technical resources**

Before the beginning of the academic year, the Quality Assurance Service examines the available material-technical resources, checks availability of material and technical resources required for the implementation of the educational process, their condition and compliance with the specifics of the educational programmes to be implemented.

Based on the analysis of the comparison results, it may be required for the Quality Assurance Service to submit recommendations to the Academic Council to ensure the necessary material and technical resources for the implementation of the training process.

#### **3.1.23. Educational Programme Evaluation**

**After the Completion of the Programme** Its evaluation is carried out with the following

**criteria:**

a) Survey of graduates;

b) Survey of employers;

The interview of the employed graduate and his / her employer

should be conducted according to the established form. The questionnaire is sent to the graduates and employers (in the relevant subdivisions and / or other relevant structures of the Ministry of Defence of Georgia) to fill them out. The results of the employed graduate and the graduate's employer interview should be communicated to the stakeholders. (With graduates / employers, this procedure can also be done online).

**3.1.24. Evaluation of Educational and Scientific Research Activities**

Evaluation of educational and scientific research activity, as usual, related to obtaining research grants and their successful implementation, disseminating and publishing findings, successful supervision of Junkers/ trainees papers/projects.

Active participation in research and publication of research results is a significant function of academic / invited staff. Supervision of Junkers papers / projects is a process accompanying scientific research activity. In addition, academic / invited staff should make extensive use of the own and other researchers' findings in the field.

The Academy does not restrict or interfere in the research activities of academic / visiting staff, but one of the quality assurance mechanisms is the regular assessment of the quality of academic / visiting staff professional development, which is reflected in their annual self-assessment reports. The reports reflect information on their achievements, participation in conferences, publication of articles, attracted local and international grants, etc.

The academic / invited staff involved in the implementation of the educational program, at the end of the second semester, after submitting the

final exam results, fills in the established self-assessment form, which is in compliance

with the academic / invited staff workload regulations.

The self-assessment forms filled out by the academic / visiting staff are processed by the Quality Assurance Service.

Based on the analysis of the self-assessment reports, it may be necessary for the Quality Assurance Service to submit recommendations to the Academic Council for further improvement of educational and scientific activities.

### **3.1.25. Evaluation of academic / invited staff / teacher / instructor by the Direction / Programme Head**

- The activities of the academic / invited staff, teachers, instructors involved in the implementation of the educational programme are evaluated by the Academy leadership.
- Evaluation in the case of academic programmes is carried out after the publication and analysis of the final exam results. In the case of a military training programme, after the results of a complex exam and analysis.
- **The Undergraduate/ Graduate Studies / Program Head evaluates the academic / invited staff / teacher / instructor** according to the written criteria and form.
- The results of the evaluation will be the basis for thanking the academic / invited staff / teacher / instructor, submitting for the certificate.

## **3.2. External Mechanisms of Quality Assurance.**

- External mechanisms for promoting the education quality development are authorization and accreditation, which is carried out by the LEPL - National Center for Education Quality Enhancement.
- Authorization is the procedure for obtaining the status of an educational institution, the purpose of which is to ensure that the required standards for the implementation of the relevant activities to issue a state-recognized education certificate are met.
- **Accreditation** is the procedure of establishing the compliance of higher education institution educational programmes with accreditation standards, which aims to establish systematic self-assessment to improve the quality of education and promote the development of quality assurance mechanisms, and related to the receipt of state funding, as well as the implementation of regulated (legal, medical, pedagogical) and doctoral education programs.

The analysis of the content and effectiveness of the military components of military training and academic training programmes is carried out by the J-7 Department of Military Education and Combat Training of the General Staff, which develops military education plans, determines military education standards by types of military, and the compatibility of educational programmes with the established rules. Develops combat training planning strategies and organizational methodological guidelines based on the tasks of the Defense Forces;

Participates in the planning, coordination and monitoring of exercises within its competence;

#### **4. The Main Principles of Quality Assurance**

The main principles that are the basis for continuous quality improvement:

1. Establish regular methodical self-assessment to improve the quality of education and

- develop quality assurance mechanisms;
2. Involvement of stakeholders in the quality assurance and development system;
  3. Access to information for all stakeholders;
  4. Use of mechanisms and criteria discussed and agreed with stakeholders for the reliability of quality assurance processes (quality assessment should be carried out unbiased and transparently, according to pre-defined and known mechanisms and criteria);
  5. Making the right, evidence-based decision, based on the analysis of available information from the Quality Assurance Service; (Quality Assurance Service informs the stakeholders about the research/monitoring results, recommendations. They should be discussed with the relevant structural units and stakeholders so that the recommendations and decisions are based on complete information and take into account the data and positions of the respondents and the evaluated party).
  6. To take appropriate action to remedy any deficiencies identified, reflect them in action plans and recommendations, and implement them. (Evaluation results should be provided to all stakeholders who are obliged to respond).

## **5. Junker/trainee centered learning, teaching and evaluation**

1. A Junker / trainee centered approach (or system) facilitates the development of an educational programme focused on Junker/trainee achievement, various learning priorities, and a rational learning load.
2. The Academy has implemented the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), which is a Junker/trainee-centered system based on learning outcomes and transparency of the learning process. It reflects the academic workload that the Junker/trainee needs to achieve the curriculum goals and learning outcomes.
  - Junker/trainee-centered Learning involves the active involvement of the Junker/trainee

in the development of the learning process, its content and evaluation.

- The style of active teaching, first of all, should be reflected in the teaching, assessment methods and teaching materials developed by the teacher.
- Using learning outcomes to describe a programme and module makes it clear to Junkers/trainees what they should expect to achieve after completing the programme or module. It also helps Junkers/trainees to select a programme and actively participate in Junker/trainee-centered learning.
- The learning process should be based on the significant teaching principle confirmed by many studies. Junkers/trainees learn better when they are actively involved in the learning process. The Junker/trainee-centered learning promotes and recognizes the Junker/trainee's initiative, encourages questions from the Junkers/trainees, recognizes the crucial role of experience in learning, promotes the Junker/trainee's natural curiosity, takes into account the mental model of the Junker/trainee, emphasizes performance and understanding in the evaluation process, allows the development and understanding of new knowledge.

The use and alternation of lecture teaching and active teaching methods in the learning process and the combination of teaching methods increase the effectiveness of teaching and ensure the efficient remembering the information received. Active teaching refers to an interactive form of training, where Junkers/trainees are actively involved in the learning process, a various task are given (specific tasks, exercises, etc. are participating in discussions, debates, seminars, presentations, etc.), based on the material that was interpreted during the lecture. Active teaching methods help to absorb new material more effectively and reinforce old material, as the Junkers/trainees have to operate actively on the information received in the auditorium. In addition, the teacher is allowed to control the quality of the material mastering and identify existing problems in a timely manner.

- Junkers/trainees assessment: Known in advance criteria, regulations, and procedures should be used to assess Junkers/trainees.

Based on all of the above, recognizing the important role of the teacher in the development of the Junker/trainee and the achievement of learning outcomes, the Academy shares the characteristics of an efficient teacher according to the scheme of M. Hildebrand, 1971<sup>2</sup>:

### **Organization and clarity**

- Explains clearly;
- Is well prepared;
- Makes complex material easy to understand;
- Uses examples, analogies, comparisons and various methods of explanation to make the material not only understandable but also memorable;
- Makes the purpose of the training course and each lesson clear and understandable;
- Prepares auxiliary materials.

### **Analytical / synthetic approach**

- Has a profound and systematic knowledge of the field;
- Can compare various theories and their results;
- Forms a sense of the field in the Junker/trainee, informs him about past, present and future directions, the origins of ideas and concepts;
- Links with the neighboring fields, presents facts and concepts;
- Discusses various points of view.

### **Dynamics and Enthusiasm**

- Is an active, dynamic person;
- Seems to enjoy teaching;

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<sup>2</sup>M. Hildebrand, R.C. Wilson, and E.R. Dienst, Evaluating University Teaching. (Berkeley: UC Berkeley, Center for Research and Development in Higher Education, 1971)

- Conveys the love of the field to the Junkers / trainees;
- Is competent.

#### **Teacher - group interaction**

- Can manage, motivate and relate to the audience;
- Promotes independent thinking and receives criticism;
- Uses joking and humor effectively;
- Is a good communicator;
- Knows whether the class follows the material and feels the motivation of the Junkers / trainees;
- Cares about the quality of teaching.

#### **Teacher - Junker/trainee interaction**

- Perceived by the Junker/trainee as fair person, especially his assessment methods;
- He is an accessible and valuable resource for the Junker / trainee to get advice even on issues that are not directly related to the course.

### **6. Information openness and transparency, ensuring access to information**

To ensure openness, transparency of information and access to it, the Quality Assurance Service e-learning platform in the folder opened in ILIAS, places all quality assurance regulatory documents, study / monitoring results, analysis, recommendations (following the principle of confidentiality).



## **7. Academic Freedom**

### **7. 1. Protecting Academic Integrity and Ensuring Freedom**

Protecting academic integrity and ensuring freedom is one of the most significant and basic principles in the National Defence Academy.

Each group of the Academy's academic community (academic / invited staff / instructors / Junkers / trainees / leadership) has its own role and responsibility to be involved in various areas of the Academy's activity. Besides their duties and responsibilities, they must be safeguarded and protected from all forms of intolerance and discrimination.

A Junker / trainee / academic / invited staff / teacher / instructor, etc. who writes a complaint or a negative comment - should not be punished. Everyone has the right to express their grievances/opinions regarding the teaching process and the appraisal received.

In case of dissatisfaction, the Junker / trainee should first apply to the teacher. If this form of grievance is unsuccessful, the issue should be brought to the attention of the Undergraduate / Graduate Studies/ School Head / Commander and members of the Quality Assurance Service.

Information should be provided to the Undergraduate / Graduate Studies/ School Head / Commander and members of the Quality Assurance Service both in person and electronically or by phone. The telephone numbers and e-mails of members of the Quality Assurance Service are listed in the ILIAS Quality Assurance Service folder

## 7.2. Guarantees of Academic Freedom

The National Defense Academy recognizes and ensures the academic freedom of academic and invited staff, teachers and instructors, Junkers and trainees, and members of the Administration. It shares and acts following the current legislation of Georgia:

According to Article 19 of the Constitution of Georgia:

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of speech, thought, conscience, religion and belief;
2. It is inadmissible to persecute a person because of his speech, thought, confession, or belief, as well as coercion to express his / her opinion about them;
3. It is inadmissible to restrict the freedoms listed in this article, if their manifestation does not violate the rights of others.

According to Article 23 of the Constitution of Georgia:

1. The freedom of intellectual creativity is guaranteed. Intellectual property rights are inviolable;
2. Interference in the creative process, censorship in the field of creative activities is not allowed;
3. Seizure and prohibition of distribution of a creative work shall not be permitted unless its distribution violates the legal rights of another person.

According to the Law of Georgia on Higher Education, Academic freedom is the right of academic / invited staff and Junkers / trainees, to conduct scientific research, teaching and learning independently (Article 2 c). According to the same law, a higher education institution ensures the academic freedom of academic / invited staff and Junkers / trainees and to achieve the goals provided by law: The higher education institution provides access to higher education and openness, academic freedom of teaching, learning and research.

The Law on the Rights of Academic Staff enshrines a separate provision, according to which, "Higher education institution ensures the academic, scientific, teaching and research freedom of academic staff and creates appropriate conditions for their activities." (Article 37.3)

Also, according to Article 37, the academic staff has the right:

- b) To carry out the teaching, research, creative activities and publish scientific research without interference;
- c) Within the framework of the educational program, to determine the content of the study course programs (syllabi), teaching methods and means independently;

The law stipulates that restriction of academic freedom is allowed only in the following cases:

- a) Concerning the freedom of scientific research - in organizing organizational issues and priorities;
- b) Concerning the freedom of teaching- in the solution of organizational issues of the educational process, in the issues of approval of the lecture schedule and curricula;
- c) Concerning the freedom of learning – in organizing the learning process and ensuring high quality teaching.

## **8. Academic integrity and academic dishonesty**

Academic integrity is based on such fundamental values as honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Academic integrity is one of the core guiding principles of academic activity for the academic community of the Academy and all its members should act following this principle. According to the Code of Ethics of the Academy and the mechanisms of regulating the case of academic integrity and plagiarism at the LEPL - David Aghmashenebeli National Defence Academy of Georgia, the Academy provides efficient cooperation between staff and Junkers/trainees. Intellectual, cultural, physical and moral upbringing; Junker/trainee-centered military and civilian training, preparation of leaders with perfect higher education, competitive and successful career advancement. All Junkers / trainees are required to adhere to the principles of academic dignity and integrity along with the study.

All members of the Academy community should respect the dignity and rights and property of other members of the community and promote the creation and maintenance of an environment in which everyone can succeed through their hard work and study. Academic conscientiousness implies the obligation of all members of the Academy community not to engage in acts of falsification, misleading or deception.

To protect the rights of Junkers / trainees, to gain trust and to establish appropriate rules of conduct, the Academy and its governing body must constantly maintain high standards of academic integrity

and, in turn, take reasonable steps to identify and prevent any manifestation of dishonesty.

The issues of academic integrity in the Academy are regulated by the document: "Mechanisms for Regulating Cases of Academic Integrity and Plagiarism at the LEPL - David Agmashenebeli Georgian National Defence Academy"

In this direction, the programme "INTEGRITY" was implemented in the Academy withme, within which the following activities were carried out (2017-2020)

- PR Campaign - was conducted a PR campaign to raise awareness about plagiarism, as well as joint activities. Project dissemination activities were covered and downloadable on the website materials were prepared.
- Training of implementing staff - needs were identified in terms of teachers training; a trainings was prepared.
- Junkers / trainees Technical Services - Involvement of the institution in the maintenance / assembly of technical services for Junkers, development of the Consortium joint activities.
- Direction of Academic Writing - Develop / revise academic writing curriculum and teaching methods. Further monitor the ongoing institutional activities in this area (in house training) in order to align with the project objectives.
- University Policy and Resources - Develop internal university regulations and common policies for plagiarism detection and prevention.

## 9. Quality assurance of e-learning

In case of force majeure / pandemic, the educational process and its monitoring is carried out following the rules established in the Academy.

During e-Learning the Quality Assurance Service is guided by a document developed by the LEPL - National Center for Education Quality Enhancement "Advice for Institutions on E-Learning Quality Assurance" and a document developed by the European Higher Education Quality Assurance Association (ENQA)

on "Considerations for Quality Assurance in E-Learning".

**10. The following factors are taken into account during the distance education in the Academy:**

- In the case of distance learning<sup>3</sup>, the learning activities are planned in exactly the same way as in face-to-face learning;
- Mechanisms for introducing and using the form of distance learning in the learning process have been developed, which include issues related to curriculum planning, including teaching, learning and assessment methods, as well as material resources (library, information), organization and administration of the learning process.
- Distance learning ensures the active participation of Junkers / trainees in the learning process, both during lecture and seminar work.
- The principal challenge when conducting distance learning courses is to ensure the achievement of the learning objectives and outcomes provided by the educational program, training courses /

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<sup>3</sup> Lectures / seminars provided by the training courses are carried out remotely, for this the Junkers / students do not need to come to the building of the higher education institution. Distance learning courses are implemented using such tools as video / audio conferencing and Internet or print-based media.

modules. Academic / invited staff, teachers and instructors know exactly what learning outcomes should be achieved by Junkers / trainees in distance learning in order to ultimately achieve the learning outcomes envisaged by the educational programme;

- The Academy recognizes that all Junkers / trainees and academic / invited staff, teachers and instructors may not have access to the Internet or have limited study space at home;
- The relevant structural unit of the Academy is responsible for providing training resources for Junkers / trainees, especially library and IT

resources.

- Academic / invited staff, teachers, and instructors are offered systematic training on distance learning methods by

the Quality Assurance Service.

- In the case of field trips / practical training, the negative consequences caused by the situation in the Academy are minimized;
- The Academy provides communication with Junkers / trainees about the changes made, they are informed about the possible consequences of switching to remote mode.
- The Academy's IT infrastructure and IT systems ensure distance learning for Junker / trainees.
- Assessment of Junkers / trainees is carried out following the rules established at the Academy.
- Assessment can be done through the ILIAS electronic learning management platform operating at the Academy, as well as

- through Group work support electronic platforms.
- Academic / invited staff, teachers and instructors are authorized to select the appropriate communication platform taking into account the interests of the Junkers / trainees. Besides individual feedback, to provide a feedback on Junker / trainee assessments remotely, academic / invited staff / teachers / instructors can record videos of the strengths and weaknesses of the work performed by the entire group of Junkers / trainees and share them.
  - If distance learning is not possible, the workload of Junkers / trainees and academic / invited staff, teachers and instructors will be evaluated by the relevant structural units of the Academy and a plan will be developed based on this.
  - Practical courses for which the distance learning format is inappropriate are recommended to be postponed until the danger is eliminated.<sup>4</sup>
  - The Academy ensures protection of personal data following the Law of Georgia on Personal Data Protection.

## **Bibliography**

The Quality Assurance Guide is based on and the document uses inserts from the following documents:

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<sup>4</sup> Mixed / hybrid training courses. These are training courses that are designed to include online and face-to-face teaching methods.



1. Law of Georgia on Higher Education
2. Order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia №99/n on approving the provision of authorization of educational institutions and fees;
3. Order of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia №65 /n on approving the regulations and fees for accreditation of educational programmes of educational institutions;
4. Education Quality Assurance Guide; National Center for Education Quality Enhancement, 2011;
5. Quality Assurance Standards and Guidelines (ESG) in the European Higher Education Area, 2015;
6. European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and Diploma Supplement, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, 2005
7. European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), Manual, European Commission, 2009;
8. Combination of educational structures in Europe. Universities Contributing to the Bologna Process, Tuning Project, 2008;
9. Tamar Bregvadze, Internal Institutional Mechanisms for Quality Assurance, Guide, Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, 2009;
10. Bar S. Parsonson, Quality assurance in teaching departments;

11. Tamar Zaalishvili, University Autonomy and Academic Freedom, Education Policy, International Institute for Planning and Management, 2013;
12. University Management Handbook, Liberty Institute 2007;
13. David Tinikashvili, Peculiarities of Assessment in Finnish School Education [www.internetgazeti.ge](http://www.internetgazeti.ge), 2013;
14. Advice for institutions on ensuring the quality of e-learning <https://eqe.ge/geo/news/show/53/2949> ;

The quality assurance guidelines and procedures of the following higher education institutions are shared:

15. Pennsylvania state University <http://www.psu.edu/> ;
- 16.** Stanford University <http://www.stanford.edu/> <https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/>;
17. University of Virginia [www.virginia.edu](http://www.virginia.edu) ;
18. University of Greenwich <http://www2.gre.ac.uk/> ;