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HELLENIC REPUBLIC
H.Q.A.
HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT of MILITARY SCIENCES

HELLENIC ARMY ACADEMY



European Union
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MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, CULTURE & SPORTS
MANAGING AUTHORITY



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

The External Evaluation Committee

Introduction

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

- Brief account of documents examined, of the Site Visit, meetings and facilities visited.

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

- Comments on the quality and completeness of the documentation provided and on the overall acceptance of and participation in the Quality Assurance procedures by the Department .

A. Curriculum

APPROACH

- Goals and objectives of the Curriculum, structure and content, intended learning outcomes.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Rationality, functionality, effectiveness of the Curriculum.

RESULTS

- Maximizing success and dealing with potential inhibiting factors.

IMPROVEMENT

- Planned improvements.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

- Pedagogic policy and methodology, means and resources.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Quality and evaluation of teaching procedures, teaching materials and resources, mobility.

RESULTS

- Efficacy of teaching, understanding of positive or negative results.

IMPROVEMENT

- Proposed methods for improvement.

C. Research

APPROACH

- Research policy and main objectives.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Research promotion and assessment, quality of support and infrastructure.

RESULTS

- Research projects and collaborations, scientific publications and applied results.

IMPROVEMENT

- Proposed initiatives aiming at improvement.

D. All Other Services

APPROACH

- Quality and effectiveness of services provided by the Department.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Organization and infrastructure of the Department's administration (e.g. secretariat of the Department).

RESULTS

- Adequateness and functionality of administrative and other services.

IMPROVEMENTS

- Proposed initiatives aiming at improvement.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations***E. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors***

- Short-, medium- and long-term goals and plans of action proposed by the Department.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC on:

- The development and present situation of the Department, good practices and weaknesses identified through the External Evaluation process, recommendations for improvement.

External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Department of Military Sciences of the Hellenic Army Academy consisted of the following three (3) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQA in accordance with Law 3374/2005 :

1. Professor Hugh GRIFFITHS (Coordinator)
(Title) (Name and Surname)
University College London
(Institution of origin)

2. Professor Nikolaos LIMNIOS
(Title) (Name and Surname)
Université de Technologie de Compiègne (France) Laboratoire de Mathématiques Appliquées
(Institution of origin)

3. Mr PAILE-CALVO Sylvain
(Title) (Name and Surname)
University of Liège (Belgium), Department of Political Science
(Institution of origin)

N.B. The structure of the “Template” proposed for the External Evaluation Report mirrors the requirements of Law 3374/2005 and corresponds overall to the structure of the Internal Evaluation Report submitted by the Department.

The length of text in each box is free. Questions included in each box are not exclusive nor should they always be answered separately; they are meant to provide a general outline of matters that should be addressed by the Committee when formulating its comments.

Introduction

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

- Dates and brief account of the site visit.
- Whom did the Committee meet?
- List of Reports, documents, other data examined by the Committee.
- Groups of teaching and administrative staff and students interviewed
- Facilities visited by the External Evaluation Committee.

The evaluation of the Hellenic Army Academy (HAA) by the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) took place over the week 2 – 6 February 2015.

Documentation, including the Programme for the week, Guidelines explaining the purpose and the process to be followed, the Internal Evaluation Report (dated September 2014, and covering the years 2010 – 2014), as well as links to relevant websites, were made available two weeks in advance of the visit, giving adequate time to read and to prepare. The Internal Evaluation Report had been written and edited by the Internal Evaluation Committee: Professor Anna-Maria Vidali (Head), Nikolaos V. Karadimas and Captain George Kelesis.

An initial briefing took place at the HQA offices in Athens on the morning of 2 February, after which the EEC moved to the HAA and met with the Commandant, Major General Christos Karyotis and the Deputy Commandant, Brigadier General George Letsios, followed by an introductory briefing on the HAA and its structure and organisation. In the afternoon the EEC met with the Dean of Academic Affairs, Mr Andreas Dimitriou and the Deputy Dean, Mrs Anna-Maria Vidali, and then with the Head of the Military Education Department, Brigadier General Athanasios Tsouganatos.

The following day (3 February) included interviews with academic staff from the four Faculties, then with members of the administrative staff. These were followed by an extensive tour of the HAA’s facilities, including library, computer labs, classrooms, dormitories, medical centre and sports facilities, and then a meeting with a group of 15 Cadets, with (at our request) no members of staff present. The Cadets were extremely impressive, answering our questions fully and frankly, and demonstrating a strong commitment to the ethos and values of the HAA.

The final day (4 February) comprised a visit to the winter training field, observing Cadets training in climbing, abseiling, shooting and military manoeuvres, and finally an exit meeting with the Commandant and other senior staff at which the major findings and recommendations of the EEC were presented.

This report was drafted during the following two days (5 and 6 February).

Annex A provides a list of the HAA staff with whom the EEC met.

The EEC would like to place on record our gratitude to the Commandant and all his staff for their warm welcome and generous hospitality, for their professionalism in our discussions, and for answering our questions so fully and honestly. We also thank the staff of the HQA for their logistical support.

II. The Internal Evaluation Procedure

Please comment on:

- Appropriateness of sources and documentation used
- Quality and completeness of evidence reviewed and provided
- To what extent have the objectives of the internal evaluation process been met by the Department?

The Internal Evaluation Report document comprised 647 pages, and contained full and detailed information under all of the prescribed headings, and also including detailed summaries of students' feedback on teaching. This shows that the Department fully met the objectives of the internal evaluation process.

A. Curriculum

To be filled separately for each undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programme.

APPROACH

- What are the goals and objectives of the Curriculum? What is the plan for achieving them?
- How were the objectives decided? Which factors were taken into account? Were they set against appropriate standards? Did the unit consult other stakeholders?
- Is the curriculum consistent with the objectives of the Curriculum and the requirements of the society?
- How was the curriculum decided? Were all constituents of the Department, including students and other stakeholders, consulted?
- Has the unit set a procedure for the revision of the curriculum?

According to the “aims and objectives” for its Curriculum, the Department of Military Sciences shall:

- Produce and transmit knowledge to its students, with the teaching and research of the Military Science and Technology, as well as with the relevant Sciences of Humanities, Exact, and Applied Sciences;
- Develop military virtues and military education, in order to train Army Officers, with military morals and higher education, as well as with social, cultural and political education. The Academy provides all appropriate resources that will help them become competent leaders with proper professional and scientific skills;
- Organise Postgraduate Programmes of Studies in cooperation with other Universities and carry out scientific research in areas that interest the Army and the Armed Forces in general;
- Plan and organise Postgraduate Programmes of Studies and research programmes in matters of military science and technology, independently, under the conditions set by the law;
- Take care of students’ living, while living inside the Academy, as well as the administrative support of their educational activity.

With a view to achieve these goals, the Curriculum seeks the most appropriate balance between the academic education and the military training of the future Greek Army Officer as well as between the theoretical and practical teaching and instructing methods.

The “aims and objectives” were primarily designed and debated by the education and training actors of the Department. In this process, informal consultations took place with other universities, such as the University of Plymouth in the United Kingdom, in order to benefit from experience of other higher education institutions and best practices. Once defined, they were approved by the General Staff of the Greek Army and the Ministry of Defence and, finally, endorsed by the national representation through a law voted by the Parliament. These aims and objectives, therefore, correspond to the highest societal standards and are published in the Government Gazette, thus making them available to the public in full transparency.

The Hellenic Army Academy was referred to as a “university-level” education and training institution for the first time in the law in 2003. This status corresponds to the intellectual level that society requests from its future military officers and the “standards” met in the European Union in this sector. As regards the military training in particular, it has been

raised that the level has constantly improved and became increasingly “professional” due to the complex evolution of the defence environment and technologies. Although the cadets are currently educated at the undergraduate level, it must be noted that two of these “aims and objectives” make a clear statement of the ambition and readiness of the Department for educating its students to the level of postgraduate studies.

For its elaboration, the curriculum was defined by all the constituents of the Department, including the management structures, the academic and training staff and the students. It must be noted that, owing to the specific nature of the military education and training and the characteristics of the military, the students are not allowed to meet in unions for representing their views and interests; they can only act individually. The curriculum was adopted in 2005 by law.

At the Hellenic Army Academy, the academic curriculum is generally reviewed approximately every four years. Every semester, the students have the opportunity to evaluate the courses and the support they received for these courses anonymously and electronically. This evaluation may raise needs for reviewing the curriculum but the students do not take part in this general review. The Academic Assembly (convening the teaching staff) and the Education Board (convening all the academic, management and commanding structures) take the initiative in the review. Once defined, the amendments must be approved by the Army General Staff. It is expected that in the next academic year a review will be conducted with a view to implement the acquis of the Bologna Process and European Higher Education Area.

As regards the military training, the reviewing procedure is similar but two documents setting training priorities from the Army General Staff are used as basis for the amendments: the General Training Programme (issued for the next academic year) and the “General Training Concept” (issued for the next four years).

IMPLEMENTATION

- How effectively is the Department’s goal implemented by the curriculum?
- How does the curriculum compare with appropriate, universally accepted standards for the specific area of study?
- Is the structure of the curriculum rational and clearly articulated?
- Is the curriculum coherent and functional?
- Is the material for each course appropriate and the time offered sufficient?
- Does the Department have the necessary resources and appropriately qualified and trained staff to implement the curriculum?

The Department implements its “aims and objectives” in the curriculum through a double balance. It first balances the academic education and the military training which are the two essential and complementary aspects of the training of a future Greek Army Officer. The balance is literally reached in the sense that the two components represent individually 50 per cent of the time allocated to the curriculum. It must be noted that the cultural and physical education is considered by the Department to be academic education and not military training. In a second place, a balance is also found, though not necessarily mathematically, between the teaching or instruction of theory, in classrooms or in the field, to the students on the one hand and their practice of the knowledge acquired, in the labs or in the field on the other.

The Department has not yet implemented, but reports that it has the project to do so, the measures set forth in the Bologna Process for the creation of a European Higher Education Area and an area of free mobility of knowledge and know-how. However, it has already engaged in favour of some of its measures, notably in assessing the number of European Credit Transfer System credits (ECTS) to which each academic course individually corresponds. This was done even for the physical training of the students, considered to be academic education and managed by a specific academic Faculty, according to the best practices of implementation (approximately 25 hours of student workload/ECTS).

The first two years of the curriculum apparently and majorly consist in non-elective courses aimed at providing the students with core knowledge and know-how. The following two years offer more opportunities for the students to adapt their curriculum to their individual expectations through the selection of a military specialisation and elective courses aimed at reinforcing their scientific expertise in a sector. This organisation, reportedly, satisfies all the stakeholders of the curriculum. Comments were nonetheless provided by students interviewed, which stress a need for more free time and self-study in the organisation of the student's week.

Both teachers and students report that the curriculum as organised is coherent and functional. The articulation between the academic education and the military training, notably is considered satisfactory as they do not conflict: in addition to camp periods, which are fully dedicated to military training, the daily life as a cadet and days (Fridays) dedicated to the military training provide opportunities to adequately balance both aspects.

As regards the balance between core, specialist and elective courses, all the actors expressed their satisfaction with the curriculum, though students formulated a suggestion for inserting even more core courses in the third year and, on the contrary, more elective and specialist courses to select from in the fourth year of the undergraduate studies. All also expressed their satisfaction with the possibility to practice the knowledge acquired through laboratory hours (for technical sciences) and simulation and field practice (for the social sciences), as well as with the importance given to the four academic faculties in the life of the Academy. The communication between administrative and education and training personnel with a view to the organisation of the courses is reportedly positive. The Moodle VLE platform has often been referred to as a precious support to the curriculum by all its stakeholders. However, it has been reported that the access of the teaching staff to scientific resources such as scientific journals could be improved.

The Department makes recourse for its academic education to civilian (including from police services), military (including from other branches of the Armed Forces), resident and external teachers. The teaching staff thus reflects a good diversity of backgrounds and expertise, and the students expressed not only their high degree of satisfaction and trust with its availability and qualifications for the undergraduate curriculum, but also their trust with regard to the implementation of postgraduate study programmes. Some of the teachers also developed and offer distance-learning education but this is not yet addressed to cadets.

RESULTS

- How well is the implementation achieving the Department's predefined goals and

objectives?

- If not, why is it so? How is this problem dealt with?
- Does the Department understand why and how it achieved or failed to achieve these results?

The “aims and objectives” of the Department, as it was reported, appear in the learning outcomes of the curriculum where these are defined. They are not defined for every course, notably at the undergraduate level. In the two postgraduate curricula the Department has designed and plans to offer, the learning outcomes have been defined. However, it must be outlined that the Department’s actors feel that its educational action, in line with its aims and objectives, is not recognised adequately by other higher education institutions due to its military status specificity, more specifically in Greece, although its reputation of excellence is acknowledged.

The Hellenic Army Academy must comply with its dual nature of higher education and military institution and, statutorily with the laws and regulations in these two sectors. Although this specificity may make its action more complex, the Department also recognises that it can benefit from the support inherent to its military status, notably in making recourse to Army units and logistical mission for the needs of its training action more specifically.

As regards the recognition of its education and training vis-à-vis the other higher education institutions, the Department has progressively introduced harmonised mechanisms such as those prescribed by the Bologna Process. It expressed clearly its intention and commitment to fully implement these measures in the medium term with view to ensure consistency with the national and European higher education.

IMPROVEMENT

- Does the Department know how the Curriculum should be improved?
- Which improvements does the Department plan to introduce?

The Department is fully conscious that the curriculum shall follow standards of harmonisation with the European Higher Education area with view to being recognised, nationally and internationally as a higher education curriculum of excellence. Efforts have already been made for providing assurance of the quality of the education – and training – to its civilian counterparts and the Ministry in charge with Higher Education.

The introduction of offers of postgraduate studies in the form of two programmes is, as they are also expected by the students themselves, to be seen as a major step in this direction.

The results of the internal evaluation report and the external one should be, in due time, adequately communicated to all the stakeholders of the undergraduate curriculum in order to initiate exchanges and discussions on the possible ways forward.

In its plans for the future of the academic education, the Department plans to introduce a series of – highly relevant – improvements such as the measures set forth by the Bologna Process (such as the ECTS), postgraduate and doctoral degrees, core courses in foreign languages (a first experiment will be made in May 2015 with a view to include it in the regular educational offer). With a view to reinforce its status and reputation in the higher

education area, the Department will also study possibilities to acquire greater autonomy, on the academic and scientific aspects of its mission, from the Army and the Ministry of Defence.

Besides, as regards the military training notably, the Department is in constant search for adequate mechanisms which will allow it to follow up and evaluate the training it provides, as a part of its general quality assurance policy. The Department, finally, also seeks to improve constantly the level of the preparatory semesters it organises for the “permanent” foreign students hosted and educated at the Academy.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

Does the Department have a defined pedagogic policy with regard to teaching approach and methodology?

Please comment on :

- Teaching methods used
- Teaching staff/ student ratio
- Teacher/student collaboration
- Adequacy of means and resources
- Use of information technologies
- Examination system

Cadets participate for half the time in theoretical and half in military lessons. The present evaluation focuses on the academic rather than the military teaching aspects.

The teaching at HAA is given by the four Faculties: Military History, Engineering and Mathematics, Physical Sciences, and Physical and Cultural Education.

Lessons include lectures coupled with laboratory practical work and simulation. The lectures present the general theory and exercises given in two groups of cadets.

As pointed out before, the first two years of the curriculum consist in non-elective courses aimed at providing the students with core knowledge and know-how. The following two years offer more opportunities for the students to adapt their curriculum to their individual expectations through the selection of a military specialisation and elective courses aimed at reinforcing their scientific expertise in a sector

The ratio of teaching staff/students, provided by the internal evaluation report is: 6.85:1 (16 June 2014). This ratio is regarded as excellent. For comparison, the staff/student ratio at the UK Defence Academy College of Management and Technology, Shrivenham, is approx. 10:1.

We understand that, from their early years the courses suppose a collaboration between teachers, cadets and senior cadets. The cadets are followed and supported by their professors on a weekly basis. Cadets have the opportunity to come and see their teachers at all times or to communicate by the Moodle VLE platform. Senior cadets also help and support the first year cadets.

The HAA has a large campus with wide spaces for theoretical and military teaching. Large classrooms and well equipped amphitheatres (blackboards, video-projectors, etc.) for lessons are available to cadets and faculty. It is noted that sports facility of high level are also provided, as well as a library, military museum, receptions rooms, etc.

Modern Information Technologies are fully exploited. There are two separate networks: one for administration security, and the other an internet access network. They also have Moodle VLE and video-conference facilities. Each student has a laptop computer which is provided by the HAA if necessary. Printed teaching notes are provided, as well as laboratories and simulators for practical work. All of these combine to provide an outstanding teaching environment.

The examination system is a combination of written and oral tests. There are three sets of marks: one for participation in the class, one for a mid-term written test and one for a final written examination. This corresponds to the standard European procedure of assessment.

IMPLEMENTATION

Please comment on:

- Quality of teaching procedures
- Quality and adequacy of teaching materials and resources.
- Quality of course material. Is it brought up to date?
- Linking of research with teaching
- Mobility of academic staff and students
- Evaluation by the students of (a) the teaching and (b) the course content and study material/resources

The stability of the environment (military discipline, 100% attendance in class and exams, etc.), and the very good staff/student ratio, combined with continuous assessments are excellent indicators of high quality education. A further important element is the continuous contact between teachers and students. Moreover, professors are evaluated by cadets on a regular basis.

The EEC has had the opportunity to visit all the laboratories and the printing press of the HAA. Teaching materials and lecture notes are of good quality. The on-site printing press allows teachers to keep their materials up-to-date easily. However, the laboratories are not all of the same age and same level. The equipment in some of the laboratories is rather old, and these should be re-equipped in line with international standards and new technologies.

Many teachers are also high-level researchers with the standards of other Greek or European universities. In this way these teachers are able to tie their own research to their lessons. Also, organising an annual international conference within HAA provides cadets with the opportunity not only to get in contact with top researchers in the world, but also to present their own work and dissertations in specialized sessions of this conference. This is a very positive and original point.

The mobility of teachers is limited to the effort of the HAA to fund their participation in conferences. Student mobility opportunities are consequently limited, but the military Erasmus (EMILYO) initiative in which the HAA will participate will considerably improve their mobility towards other European military academies. The EEC considers it is highly important, owing to the nature of the profession of the military officer and the international security and defence he or she evolves in, that the cadets are made familiar in their basic education with the challenges of interoperability they will face in the course of their career.

The courses are constantly evaluated by students, and the results are made available on the Moodle VLE platform.

RESULTS

Please comment on:

- Efficacy of teaching.
- Discrepancies in the success/failure percentage between courses and how they are justified.
- Differences between students in (a) the time to graduation, and (b) final degree grades.
- Whether the Department understands the reasons of such positive or negative results?

The effectiveness of teaching in HAA is shown by the fact that very few students fail in their examinations. Those that do have a chance to retake in the summer via a remedial programme. It is very rare for a student to fail a second time, but further retakes are not permitted. About 20% of first year students leave HAA, mostly because they find they are not after all suited to military life. The EEC did not notice significant differences in success/failure between courses.

It is evident that at first, due to the different origins of cadets (Greece, Cyprus and several other countries), the inhomogeneity is significant. Nevertheless, the HAA is well aware of this fact and makes every effort to smooth this inhomogeneity during the first years of study.

Primarily, the continuous and almost individualized monitoring of cadets through courses, and the permanent contact with their teachers and psychologists, as well as the care by the senior cadets for the younger ones, means that the welfare is constantly maintained.

According to the teachers (both civilian and military) progress is impressive. In the end, in spite of their individual characteristics, cadets form a homogeneous group, and any discrepancy is small.

IMPROVEMENT

- Does the Department propose methods and ways for improvement?
- What initiatives does it take in this direction?

The EEC is fully aware of the current economic difficulties facing Greece. The few weaknesses are already acknowledged within the HAA, namely:

- Improvement of certain laboratories (physics, mechanics and chemistry);
- Improvement of the library services (connection with the national system of inter-library loans and downloading of documents) to bring them up to European standards;
- Better connection between research and teaching.

C. Research

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

APPROACH

- What is the Department's policy and main objective in research?
- Has the Department set internal standards for assessing research?

Research is central to any institution of Higher Education, both for its own sake and because it ensures that the teaching is up-to-date and relevant. It should be realised that the HAA is in a unique position to undertake research into military science, since it can take advantage of the knowledge and experience of the military staff. This is something that would not be available to a conventional university.

The development of a research agenda is in its infancy, but is recognised as being of high priority. The Academy records metrics such as publications, research collaborations, but there do not appear to be clear standards or targets.

IMPLEMENTATION

- How does the Department promote and support research?
- Quality and adequacy of research infrastructure and support.
- Scientific publications.
- Research projects.
- Research collaborations.

The individual Academic Divisions organise one-day meetings each year to present and disseminate their research activities. There are some laboratories with research facilities, notably a laboratory of Atomic and Nuclear Physics, but apart from those the research infrastructure and support is limited.

An annual three-day conference on Military Science is organised, and has grown in size and reputation over five years.

Academy staff publish a number of books and papers in academic journals and at conferences each year. Research collaborations with other universities in Greece and worldwide exist, but are largely on an *ad hoc* basis and currently lack funding to allow (for example) staff exchanges.

RESULTS

- How successfully were the Department's research objectives implemented?
- Scientific publications.
- Research projects.
- Research collaborations.
- Efficacy of research work. Applied results. Patents etc.
- Is the Department's research acknowledged and visible outside the Department?
Rewards and awards.

The Internal Evaluation document provides a list of research activities and achievements such as publications, research projects and research collaborations in the prescribed format. However, the scope for these has been constrained by available funding.

Some significant achievements include:

- The establishment of two postgraduate courses, to start in mid-February 2015. This development is strongly commended;
- Organisation of an annual international conference on aspects of military science which has grown over 5 years to three days and three parallel sessions, with Proceedings published by Springer in the form of an edited book;
- Research relationships with other universities, though as noted, so far these are largely on an *ad hoc* basis;
- Leading a multinational research project SENERA under the NATO Science for Peace programme, due to start in March 2015.

The visibility of this research – particularly the conference – is good.

IMPROVEMENT

- Improvements in research proposed by the Department, if necessary.
- Initiatives in this direction undertaken by the Department.

There is no plan yet in place for the systematic development and pursuit of the research agenda, and it is recommended therefore that the Academy should produce a written research plan. This could include:

- The appointment of a Director of Research;
- Hosting of NATO and/or EU Lecture Series events;
- Continuation and expansion of bilateral collaborations with Greek and overseas universities;
- Pooling and sharing laboratory facilities with other military academies, perhaps even forming a joint Doctoral School.

The plan should also include defining an approach to assessing research, in terms of quantitative metrics such as publications in international journals, number of postgraduate studies (and ultimately PhD) theses, and international collaborations.

The plan should be progressive (covering, say, 5 years) and realistic (taking into account potential limitations on budgets).

D. All Other Services

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

APPROACH

- How does the Department view the various services provided to the members of the academic community (teaching staff, students).
- Does the Department have a policy to simplify administrative procedures? Are most procedures processed electronically?
- Does the Department have a policy to increase student presence on Campus?

As the Hellenic Army Academy educates the Cadets according to the principles, values and organisation of the military profession, it takes into serious consideration the well-being of the students in all aspects of their life during their education, training and daily life at the Academy. The administrative services, in all these aspects, play a vital role and support the teaching staff in their action and interaction with the instructing staff.

The Department has a policy for simplifying the administrative procedures for the Cadets, the teaching staff and the administrative staff. The grading system, notably, is supported by the Moodle VLE platform as it allows the students obtaining the information on their grades and, for the teachers, to communicate with their students and provide them with information on the courses, such as the teaching material. The functionalities and use of the Moodle VLE platform seem to meet the general satisfaction of the stakeholders of the curriculum.

The Academy, following the Greek Army's regulations, cannot allow the cadets meeting in groups for representing their collective interests, such as civilian students' unions. It does not have a policy for increasing student presence on the campus thereof. Nonetheless, cadets are full-time resident students of the campus and the foreign cadets accomplishing their basic education at the Academy are accommodated permanently on the campus starting from their preparatory year. Premises are also made specifically available to all the students for their learning and leaving on the campus (dormitories, mess, medical centre, etc.).

IMPLEMENTATION

- Organization and infrastructure of the Department's administration (e.g. secretariat of the Department).
- Form and function of academic services and infrastructure for students (e.g. library, PCs and free internet access, student counselling, athletic- cultural activity etc.).

The Administrative Division, under the authority of the Academy's Command, provides administrative support to the students, the teaching staff (notably as regards examination and grading procedures) and the cadets' battalions commanders. It administers the premises and facilities of the Academy, which the four faculties use for their educational mission. The Administrative Division also comprises an international relations office, which could become more visible in the structure as the participation of the Academy to the "Erasmus +" programme, as it is projected, and exchanges of students and staff members of the Academy would increase.

It must be noted that, according to the Army's regulations, the military personnel of the Academy, including military academic teaching staff, may be replaced as often as every two years, which makes it potentially difficult for the Academy and its structures to implement

the curriculum in the best conditions.

The students benefit from an important – and reportedly satisfactory – administrative support in their learning and training. As regards information technologies, the Academy is fairly well-equipped with a security network, a network for the internet access of the students in every education and accommodation building, servers, the Moodle VLE platform and the supply of laptops to every student who does not have one of his/her own.

The teaching staff and the students can also benefit from the support of a military-owned printing press, which notably prints students' works and a two-yearly scientific publication of the Academy's teaching and researching staff.

The sport and combat simulation facilities are of very good quality and are adequately maintained and kept up-to-date according the highest standards. They provide a reliable support to the academic education of the future officers.

In addition, it must be noted that the cadets themselves, in the military configuration, play a crucial role in the support that is brought to their fellow students, as senior cadets are also responsible for the care of the more junior ones in the daily life at the Academy and according to the military values and ethos.

RESULTS

- Are administrative and other services adequate and functional?
- How does the Department view the particular results?

The support of the administrative services, as well as the substantial support from the individuals that is inherent to the military specificity of the organisation, is considered excellent by all the stakeholders of the curriculum. Additionally to the Academy's internal support, the cadets are also entitled to benefit from the support (for example psychological one) made available to the Greek military personnel.

The Department, including its quality assurance team, are satisfied with the outcomes of the internal evaluation process. They reported that it allowed relevant and constructive debates taking place between the different backgrounds and expertise – civilian, military, external, etc. – that compose the personnel of the Academy on the visions for the future of the Department's education and training policy. It is considered key to secure the involvement and commitment of the students for the internal reviews of the education, notably through constant communication and exchange of views and results, as it represents an additional "workload" for them. The internal quality assurance team also declared its intention to complete in the future the model questionnaire it was provided with for this first review, as the model does not fully cover the realities and challenges of military students' audience.

IMPROVEMENTS

- Has the Department identified ways and methods to improve the services provided?
- Initiatives undertaken in this direction.

Every semester, the cadets are invited, in their evaluation of the courses, to assess also the administrative support related to these courses. These feedbacks are then used for improving

the education at the Academy with view to the next academic year or in the context of a general internal evaluation (every four years). In addition, they can constantly formulate their comments to the different services, notably through the voice of their class spokesmen.

Finally, the Department's Education Board constitutes an essential forum for the formal dialogue of the administrative and teaching and instructing staff.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

Please, comment on quality, originality and significance of the Department's initiatives.

At the Hellenic Army Academy the physical and cultural education of the future military officers is organised as a part of their academic education. This original choice is formalised in a fully-fledged structure, which is the Faculty of Physical and Cultural Education and has its own academic staff, including permanent teachers with the rank of (university) professors. The Faculty shares the sport facilities notably, although it does not administer them, with the Military Training Department for the needs of the non-academic training of the cadets, and with external organisations such as civilian sports clubs.

The Academy is also involved in social activities aimed at the society in general.

Finally, it has established an additional prerequisite curriculum, in preparation for the undergraduate one, for foreign cadets who will complete their entire basic education at the Academy. The purpose of these two semesters is to provide these specific students with Greek language lessons, with view to their integration into the "normal" corps of cadets, mathematics, physics and Greek history and culture courses. These foreign students have reported their high level of satisfaction with this preparatory semester that is entirely dedicated and adapted to their needs with view to follow the undergraduate – and postgraduate, possibly – curriculum.

E. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

Please, comment on the Department's:

- Potential inhibiting factors at State, Institutional and Departmental level, and proposals on ways to overcome them.
- Short-, medium- and long-term goals.
- Plan and actions for improvement by the Department/Academic Unit
- Long-term actions proposed by the Department.

The Hellenic Army Academy must statutorily follow the law and regulations edited for both

the higher education and the Armed Forces areas. Its students are also military cadets and their rights, in their military capacity, are limited thereof. The teaching staff, both military and civilian, is also subjected to this dual nature in its work: the curriculum, the programme, the teaching process, and the research must cope with double standards, where existing, and with the policy of the State Government, unlike civilian higher education institutions.

From a budgetary aspect, the military status of the Academy fairly ensures that its functioning is financially supported by the State Government through the Ministry of Defence. However, this means also that the Hellenic Army Academy has limited financial and budgetary autonomy and is subject to macro-economical shortcuts in national public spending. In this respect, the difficulties faced by the institution for obtaining the creation of a separate budgetary account dedicated to the creation and sustainment of postgraduate studies and research is revealing.

An adequate balance between financial sustainability and budgetary, academic and scientific independence must be, in the views of the EEC, the object of a search of compromise between the Hellenic Army Academy and its State authorities for allowing the Academy to fully express its education and training excellence at national, European and international levels.

In the short term, the Department aims at developing its educational offer with view to answer the needs of a modern, highly educated and skilled Greek Army officer. For this reason, it will propose to the Greek Army personnel, starting in February 2015, two postgraduate study programmes in technical sciences and in applied sciences organised in partnership with the Technical University of Crete. It will also propose doctoral studies and degrees in the areas covered by the postgraduate curricula. Finally, it will organise in May 2015 for the first time an academic module in English (on law of armed conflicts), with view to integrate it in the curriculum on a permanent basis for the following academic years and possibly and progressively introduce more teachings in foreign languages.

On the medium term, the Department aims at implementing measures, which will allow it to comply with the “standards” of excellence of the European Higher Education Area in which its European civilian and military counterparts evolve. It expressed its intention to the EEC to implement the Bologna Process’ lines of action, such as the use of the ECTS in the academic courses or the transformation of the undergraduate and postgraduate study programmes into bachelor and masters, starting from the academic year 2015-2016. It also expressed its intention, based on this internal transformation, to apply and participate in the Erasmus + programme for enhancing the exchanges of students and staff with civilian and military European higher education institutions.

In the long term, the Department envisages also solutions for pooling and sharing research and doctoral studies capacities with the other academies of the Greek Armed Forces, such as laboratories and other teaching and researching resources, which would help rationalising costs and investments in the area for both the institutions and the Ministry of Defence.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC on:

- the development of the Department to this date and its present situation, including explicit comments on good practices and weaknesses identified through the External Evaluation process and recommendations for improvement
- the Department's readiness and capability to change/improve
- the Department's quality assurance.

Conclusions:

1. The EEC has found an Academy with a strong military ethos, and a proper balance between academic and military education. There is a culture of partnership between the military and academic staff.
2. It was especially impressed with the Cadets, who provided very supportive comments and demonstrated a strong commitment to the values of the Academy and its evaluation process.
3. The students acknowledge the competence of their Professors, and their willingness to be constantly available to all the students.
4. The development of the relations and exchanges of the HAA with other national, European and international civilian and military higher education corresponds not only to a need for possibly rationalising academic and scientific resources but also to the necessities of the strategic security and defence context in which the future military officers are called to evolve.
5. The ambition of the teaching and researching staff to develop its international scientific activities is acknowledged, notably in hosting NATO or EU lecture series in relevant subject for the Department.
6. The adequacy and transparency of the examination process used for the undergraduate curriculum is acknowledged.
7. The administrative and logistical support provided to all the stakeholders of the curricula appears to function properly and is considered adequate.
8. The EEC wholeheartedly supports the introduction of postgraduate and doctoral study programmes at the HAA.

Recommendations:

9. It is recommended that the Academy should develop a written research plan, covering the next 5 years, and defining an approach to the assessment of research quality including criteria such as international publications, number of postgraduate and PhD theses, and international collaborations and exchanges.
10. It is recommended that the measures aimed at providing the adequate conditions for exchanging students and staff with other higher education institutions and the mutual recognition of the benefits of an exchange in the student's curriculum, such as the Bologna Process, be fully implemented.
11. Whilst the IT provision in the HAA is modern, some of the laboratory equipment is rather dated. It is recommended that this should be kept up-to-date through constant efforts of investment from all the relevant actors of the functioning of the Academy.
12. The EEC recommends that the bilateral contacts of teaching and research staff members with other higher education institutions, in Greece or abroad, be continued and reach the level of cooperation and exchange programmes of staff and students.
13. It is recommended that the Academy should explore the possibilities to "pool and share" scientific facilities – such as laboratories, and capabilities, and in creating joint doctoral schools – with other Greek and European military higher education institutions, where relevant.

The Members of the Committee

Name and Surname	Signature
1. _____	
2. _____	
3. _____	

Annex A: List of Principal Staff with whom the EEC met

Senior Staff:

- Major General Christos KARYOTIS**, Commandant
- Brigadier General George LETSIOS**, Deputy Commandant
- Brigadier General Athanasios TSOUGANATOS**, Head of Military Education Department
- Mr Andreas DMITRIOU**, Dean of Academic Affairs
- Mrs Anna-Maria VIDALI**, Deputy Dean

Academic Staff:

- Emmanouel XIDERIS** (Retired General, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences)
- Panagiotis MAVROPOULOS** (Retired General, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences)
- Nikolaos KANELOPOULOS** (Air Force Major, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences)
- Theodoros LIOLIOS** (Associate Professor, Director of Faculty of Physical Sciences and Applications)
- Constantine KARAFASOULIS** (Special Laboratory Teaching Staff on Physics, Faculty of Physical Sciences and Applications)
- Dimitrios GKRTZAPIS** (Police Major, Lecturer in contract Ballistics, Faculty of Mathematics and Engineering Sciences)
- Elias PANAGIOTOPOULOS** (Police Major, Lecturer in contract Ballistics, Faculty of Mathematics and Engineering Sciences)
- Nikolaos ZOGRAFOPOULOS** (Associate Professor in Mathematics, Faculty of Mathematics and Engineering Sciences)
- George KAIMAKAMIS** (Associate Professor in Mathematics, Faculty of Mathematics and Engineering Sciences)
- Thrassivoulos PAXINOS** (Professor, Faculty of Physical and Cultural Education)
- Constantinos CHAVENITIDIS** (Associate Professor, Faculty of Physical and Cultural Education)

Internal Evaluation Committee

- Professor Anna-Maria VIDALI**, Head of Internal Evaluation Committee
- Lecturer Nikolaos V. KARADIMAS**, Member of the Internal Evaluation Committee
- Captain George KELESIS**, Member of Internal Evaluation Committee

Administrative Staff:

- Dimitris TSIGAS** (Administrative personnel, Military training department, Office of Monitoring Cadets)
- Emmanouel MANOLIS** (Captain, Military training department, Office of Monitoring Cadets)
- Alexandros GIOULIS** (Major, Military training department, International Student Unit)

Xenia TSIMEKA (Administrative personnel, Dean's Office, Master and PhD Programmes Unit)

George CHASSANAKOS (Captain, Military Erasmus Programme Office)

Christos ANAGNOSTOPOULOS (Lieutenant, IT Department)