

NAUKI O BEZPIECZEŃSTWIE / SECURITY STUDIES

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INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT OF PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION: A WAY TO QUALITY ASSURANCE ACCORDING TO NATO STANDARDS

Introduction

The priorities on providing national security of Ukraine are as follows: defending the independence and state sovereignty; restoration of territorial integrity within the internationally recognized state border of Ukraine; development of human capital; protection of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of citizens of Ukraine; European and Euro-Atlantic integration. Development and capacity building of the defence forces in accordance with NATO norms, principles and standards become an important condition for ensuring the priorities¹.

The National Security Strategy of Ukraine is aimed at reforming, developing the security and defence sector, which consists in defense and security reform according to NATO norms, principles and standards, and one of the ways to fulfill the assigned task is to conduct professionalization of military service.

Currently, the military education system is in a phase of intensive transformation. The ambitious task is to achieve sufficient compatibility with the structures of NATO member states as soon as possible. A modern vision of further development of the system stimulates the implementation NATO standards into

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¹ Decree of the President of Ukraine № 392/2020, *On the national security strategy of Ukraine*.

military education and training sphere. A professionally competent serviceman motivated by the projected career growth becomes the key for building a modern professional army.

It is known that achieving compliance of learning outcomes with certain goals, requirements, standards and indicators characterizes the quality of education. Laws “On education”², “On higher education”³, regulations of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine⁴ state bodies⁵ and educational institutions, regulate ensuring the quality of education in Ukraine.

The requirements for ensuring the quality of education and individual training of personnel in educational institutions in the interests of NATO are set out in “BI-Strategic Command Directive 075-007 / Education and Individual Training Directive” (E&IT) in the armed forces of NATO member states⁶. The quality assurance system of education in Ukraine can be divided into two subsystems: external (in relation to the educational institution) and internal (in the educational institution).

The subsystem of external quality assurance of education consists of two parts⁷. The first part comprises tools, procedures and measures (standardization, licensing, accreditation, independent evaluation, institutional audit, monitoring, certification, certification, supervision, etc.). The second one includes the following: specially authorized and independent bodies and institutions responsible for ensuring the quality of education and requirements for them.

NATO’s quality management system includes four elements in the process of measuring quality (inspection, control, guarantee, management), each with a purpose and scope.

An important common element of external quality assurance is institutional audit⁸ or inspection⁹. In Ukraine, the provisions and approaches to institutional audit have been implemented in the field of secondary education¹⁰ and are under development and testing in the field of higher education. In particular,

² Law of Ukraine, *On education* № 2145-VIII (2017 September 5), <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2145-19#Text>.

³ Law of Ukraine, *On higher education* № 1556-VII (2014 July 1), <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1556-18>.

⁴ Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, *On approval of the Regulations on accreditation of higher education institutions and specialties in higher education institutions and higher vocational schools* (2001 August 9), <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/978-2001-%D0%BF#Text>.

⁵ Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, *Regulations on the accreditation of educational programs, which provide training for higher education* (2019 July 11), <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0880-19?lang=uk#Text>.

⁶ Education and Individual Training Directive, *BI-Strategic Command Directive 075-007*, <https://www.act.nato.int/images/stories/structure/jft/ptecs/etd-075-007.pdf>.

⁷ Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, *Regulations on the accreditation of educational programs, which provide training for higher education*, op. cit.

⁸ Law of Ukraine, *On higher education* № 1556-VII, op. cit.

⁹ Education and Individual Training Directive, *BI-Strategic Command Directive 075-007*, op. cit.

¹⁰ Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, *On approval of the Procedure for carrying out institutional audit of establishments of general secondary education № 17* (2019 February 09), <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0250-19#Text>.

approaches to the accreditation of educational programs in higher education institutions have been implemented¹¹. Thus, inspection or institutional audit is an important and common element of the educational institution recognition, both in Ukraine and in NATO.

The development of military education as one of the key components of the security and defence training system is one of the important tasks in the implementation of NATO standards in the activities of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and necessitates a revision of approaches to personnel training.

A significant amount of research and publications in Ukraine and abroad is devoted to the development of military education. Thus, a vision has been formed regarding the training of officers of the joint forces for the wars of the future¹². The prospects of development of military education taking into account the course of Ukraine on integration into the European and Euro-Atlantic space are substantiated¹³. The ways of development of the personnel of sector of security and defence and the conceptual scheme of structure of experts' education for the national security system are offered¹⁴. A conceptual model of the outline of the officer of the future and further professionalization of the education system is proposed¹⁵. The components of the changes management project of the military education system on the basis of the program and project management are proved¹⁶. In addition, attention is paid to the problem of ensuring the education quality on the way to internationalization and integration into the European and world educational space¹⁷, including institutional audit¹⁸.

The Ministry of Defence of Ukraine (MoD) is implementing a number of projects to fulfill the measures in the framework of a certain defence reform using the methodology of program and project management ("Defence policy", "Human resource management", "Military management system", "Joint training and interoperability", "Infrastructure and logistics", "Democratic civilian control", "Planning and resource management", Weapons and procurement"; "Strategic

¹¹ Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, *Regulations on the accreditation of educational programs, which provide training for higher education*, op. cit.

¹² The Joint Chiefs of Staff Vision and Guidance for Professional Military Education & Talent Management, *Developing Today's Joint Officers for Tomorrow's Ways of War*, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/education/jcs_pme_tm_vision.pdf?ver=2020-05-15-102429-817.

¹³ S.T. Poltorak, *Transformation of Ukraine's military education system on the way to achieving NATO standards*, "Science and defence" 2018, No 2, pp. 3–10.

¹⁴ U.V. Punda, *Education is the main investment in the development of human capital in the security and defense sector of Ukraine*, "Science and defense" 2018, No 1, pp. 34–40.

¹⁵ D. Viter, O. Mitiahin, *Professionalization of military education in Ukraine: main directions, content and prospects*, "Military education: Collection of scientific works NDU" 2020, No 1, pp. 81–90.

¹⁶ V.S. Artamoschenko, O.U. Favorska, *Management of changes in the development of the military education system based on program and project management*, "Science and defense" 2019, No 2, pp. 40–44.

¹⁷ O. Vorobiova, M. Debych, V. Luhovyi, O. Orzhel, O. Sliusarenko, Zh. Talanova, K. Tryma, *Assessing the quality of higher education in the context of European integration: guidelines*, Instytut vyshchoi osvity NAPNU, Kyiv 2019.

¹⁸ T. Dudka, *Modern institutional audit of educational establishments: transmission of value orientations*, "Mountain School of Ukrainian Carpaty" 2020, No 22, pp. 9–13.

communications”), including the project “Professional Military Education”¹⁹. Ways, tasks, elements of implementation are outlined and are in the stage of piloting with further implementation on a permanent basis. Each stage of testing involves the analysis and validation of results with subsequent changes in the activities of educational institutions in order to improve their quality. Therefore, institutional audit becomes a necessary tool to fulfill this task.

Since 2018, a new system of military training courses has been tested in military educational institutions (MEI) of the Armed Forces of Ukraine²⁰ such as: at the strategic level – “Higher Command Studies Course (L-4)” provides for the study of the formation and implementation of state policy on national security in the military, defence and military construction; at the operational level – “Joint Staff Planning Process (L-3)” provides for the study of the processes of planning operations of groups of troops (forces) in joint headquarters according to NATO standards JOPP (Joint Operation Planning Process); at the tactical level – “Command-Staff Course (L-2)” aimed at studying the procedures for military decisions making according to the NATO standard MDMP (Military Decision Making Process) during the activities of brigade (BDE) headquarters (HQs) (battalions (BN)), as well as “Basic Officer Leadership Course” (L-1A), “Speciality Training Course” (L-1B) which will be conducted simultaneously with the obtaining the “bachelor” degree or on its basis and a course of “Captains” (L-1C), which is aimed to study the military decision-making procedures for NATO standard TLP (Troop Leading Process).

This system of courses is new and is being tested to be implemented in the activities of military authorities, military units and subdivisions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other components of the defence forces of military decision-making processes and procedures according to TLP, MDMP, JOPP.

The above mentioned system of courses forms the basis of the “professional military education” system on the way to achieving compatibility of military training processes according to NATO principles and standards. It becomes the object of institutional audit.

The term “professional military education” (PME) means specialized military education, which is obtained in non-formal education through educational programs in order to obtain appropriate levels of military education (tactical, operational and strategic), improving the professional level of military specialists, acquiring professional competencies, providing performance of official (combat) functions.

Thus, the institutional audit of the professional military education system aimed at achieving compatibility through the quality standards implementation will allow to make preliminary conclusions and substantiate recommendations for further development of the professional military education system.

¹⁹ Order of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, *On the organization of the implementation of certain measures of defence reform in the medium term No 283*, op. cit.

²⁰ V.S. Artamoshchenko, O.U. Favorska, *Management of changes in the development of the military education system based on program and project management*, pp. 40–44.

The purpose of the article is to summarize the experience of conducting institutional audit of the professional military education system in educational institutions of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) and substantiation of directions for further development of the institutional audit mechanism for assessing the quality of PME while achieving compatibility of training processes according to NATO standards.

Tasks, stages, evaluation of educational processes and summarize of institutional audit

Basing on the national approaches to assessing the quality of education²¹ and the NATO Directive E&IT²², the Department of Military Education and Science of the Ministry of Defence has developed a “Procedure for conducting the institutional audit of PME in military educational institutions of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine”.

The purpose of this measure was to evaluate the quality of military education in the context of meeting the needs of integration of Ukraine into NATO organization, the organization of educational process in new system of L-courses and the relevancy of their content to the urgent needs of defence forces in the context of hybrid threats to national security and Ukraine’s integration into NATO.

Tasks of institutional audit are as follows:

evaluation of the organization of educational activities for the implementation of educational programs;
 evaluation of the structural organization of the military education system and the management process;
 evaluation of personnel management of the military education system;
 evaluation of management of educational activities and material resources;
 evaluation of the state of development and integration of professional standards into the military education system;
 evaluation of the degree of integration of the military education system into the personnel management system of the Armed Forces of Ukraine;
 verification of compliance by educational institutions with the requirements of the legislation in the field of military education.

Moreover, the expert group members evaluated the following:
 compliance of the military education quality with national needs, standards and capabilities;
 compliance of the PME system with NATO standards;
 measures being implemented to support and improve education quality in the existing military education system;

²¹ Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, *Regulations on the accreditation of educational programs, which provide training for higher education № 977*, op. cit.

²² Education and Individual Training Directive, *BI-Strategic Command Directive 075-007*, op. cit.

consequences – changes in the effectiveness of the military education system after the implementation of the recommendations of the above mentioned expert assessment.

The institutional audit was conducted by the international expert group, which consisted of the experts from Ukraine, the United States, Canada, and the Republic of Lithuania.

The review of the military education system focused on the institutional audit of L-1A, L-1B, L-1C courses at the Hetman Petro Sahaidachnyi National Army Academy (NAA) as well as L2, L3 and L4 courses at the National Defence University of Ukraine named after Ivan Cherniakhovskyi (NDUU). However, taking into account the objectives set out in the expert group working paper and considering the fact that the L-courses effectiveness depends on broader institutional and system-wide issues, the group examined the factors that go beyond institutional audit, but characterize MEI activities in general.

The experts studied the legal and regulatory framework on the general organization of military service, the provisions of military ethics, career advancement, military personnel management, military requirements, career management, organization of individual training, education and training of servicemen, social and legal protection of servicemen.

The activities of the expert group (the international group members) were conducted mostly in a distance way (due to the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic). There was also a difficulty in studying a large number of regulations due to the absence of their translation into the English language. However, the availability of self-assessment reports, L-courses curricula placed on the NDUU and NAA websites, as well as other documents, including their versions in English, played a key role in generating the final report.

The institutional audit of the PME was conducted in three stages:

First Stage. Preparation for inspection and evaluation of educational and management processes of MEI, internal system of education quality assurance (formation of an expert group; preparation of documents for institutional audit; study of information on self-assessment as well as information related to educational programs).

Second Stage. A visit of the expert group to MEI, reviews, focus group meetings (interviews, surveys, consultations) with stakeholder representatives on MEI activities and educational program, online conferences, discussion and development of recommendations.

Third Phase. Preparation of the institutional audit report.

The evaluation of educational, management processes of MEI and the internal system of quality assurance of education was carried out according to indicators such as:

1. Design and goals of the educational program (EP):
the EP has clearly defined goals that are in line with the MEI's mission and strategy;
the goals of the EP and the program learning outcomes are determined taking into account the positions and needs of stakeholders;

EP goals and program learning outcomes are determined taking into account trends in the specialty as well as the experience of similar domestic and foreign educational programs;

EP provides an opportunity to achieve learning outcomes defined by a professional standard at the appropriate level of education (if available).

2. Structure and content of EP:

the content of the EP is well structured, the educational components make up a logically interconnected system and allow to achieve the stated goals and program learning outcomes;

the content of the EP takes into account the requirements of the relevant professional standard (if any);

the EP and the curriculum provide a practical training for PME applicants, which gives an opportunity to acquire the competencies needed for further professional activities;

the EP facilitates developing social skills (soft skills) of applicants that meet the stated objectives by PME;

the content of the EP takes into account the requirements of the relevant professional standard (if any);

the volume of EP and individual educational components (in loans of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) corresponds to the actual workload of applicants, achievement of goals and program learning outcomes.

3. Teaching and learning according to EP:

forms and methods of teaching and learning contribute to the achievement of stated goals and program learning outcomes, meet the requirements of a student-centered approach and the principles of academic freedom;

all participants are provided with timely and understandable information on the goals, content and program learning outcomes, the order and criteria of assessment within the individual educational components (in the form of a syllabus or in another similar way) in the educational process;

MEI ensures the implementation of research findings in the course of EP launching in accordance with the level of PME and the objectives of the program;

scientific and pedagogical staff (hereinafter – teachers) update the content of education on the basis of scientific achievements and modern practices in the relevant field;

teaching, learning and research related to the internationalization of MEI activities.

4. Control measures, evaluation of applicants for professional military education and academic integrity:

forms of control measures and criteria for evaluation of PME applicants are clear, understandable, make it possible to determine the applicant's achievement of learning outcomes for a particular educational component and / or educational program as a whole, as well as published in advance;

forms of applicants' certification meet the requirements of the professional standard (if any);

there are clear and understandable rules for conducting control measures, which are available to all participants during the educational process, which ensure the objectivity of examiners in particular cover procedures for preventing and resolving conflicts of interest, determine the procedure for appealing the results of control measures and the procedure of retaking them. The above mentioned procedures are followed consistently during the implementation of the EP;

MEI defines clear and understandable policies, standards and procedures for academic integrity, which are consistently followed by all participants in the educational process during the implementation of the educational program.

5. Human resources:

academic and/or professional qualification of teachers involved in the implementation of the EP ensures the achievement of the goals defined by the relevant program and program learning outcomes;

competitive selection procedures for teachers are transparent and provide an opportunity to ensure the required level of their professionalism for the successful implementation of the educational program;

MEI involves employers in the organization and implementation of the educational process;

MEI involves professionals, industry experts, employers' representatives in the classroom;

MEI promotes the professional development of teachers through its own programs or in collaboration with other organizations;

MEI stimulates the development of teaching skills.

6. Educational environment and material resources:

financial and material and technical resources (library, other infrastructure, equipment, etc.) as well as educational and methodological support of the educational program guarantee the achievement of the goals and program learning outcomes defined by the educational program;

MEI provides teachers and students of PME with free access to the relevant infrastructure and information resources required for teaching, teaching and / or research activities within the EP;

the educational environment is safe for life and health of PME students enrolled in the educational program and provides an opportunity to meet their needs and interests;

MEI provides educational, organizational, informational, advisory and social support to EPE applicants.

MEI creates sufficient conditions for realization of the right to education for people with special educational needs who study according to the educational program;

there are clear and understandable policies and procedures for resolving conflicts (including those related to sexual harassment, discrimination and /

or corruption, etc.), which are available to all participants of the educational process, and they are followed consistently during the implementation of the EP.

7. Internal quality assurance of education:

MEI consistently adheres to the established procedures concerning development, approval, monitoring and periodic review of the educational program; PME applicants are involved in the process of periodic review of the EP and other procedures to ensure its quality as partners. The position of the students is taken into account while viewing the EP; employers are directly involved in the process of a periodic review of the EP and other procedures to ensure its quality as partners; existing practice of collecting, analyzing and taking into account information about the career path of graduates of the educational program; MEI quality assurance system provides timely response to identified deficiencies in the educational program and/or educational activities for the implementation of the educational program; the results of external quality assurance of education (including comments and suggestions formulated during previous institutional audits) are taken into account when reviewing the educational program; the MEI academic community has formed a culture of quality that contributes to the continuous development of the educational program and educational activities under this program.

8. Transparency and publicity:

defined clear and understandable rules and procedures governing the rights and responsibilities of all participants in the educational process are available to them and which are consistently followed during the implementation of the educational program; MEI publishes the relevant project on its official website no later than one month before the approval of the educational program or changes to it in order to receive comments and suggestions from stakeholders; MEI publishes in a timely manner on its official website accurate and reliable information about the educational program (including its objectives, expected learning outcomes and components) to the extent sufficient to inform relevant stakeholders and the public.

The evaluation of educational activities according to the educational program was carried out according to each criterion according to the evaluation scale, which covers four levels of compliance:

level "F" – educational program and / or educational activity under this program does not meet the defined criterion, and the identified shortcomings are fundamental and / or cannot be eliminated within one year;

level "E" – educational program and / or educational activity under this program generally does not meet the defined criteria, but the identified shortcomings can be eliminated within one year;

level “B” – the educational program and educational activities under this program generally meet a certain criterion with shortcomings that are not significant;

level “A” – the educational program and educational activities under this program fully meet a certain criterion, including having an innovative / exemplary character.

A positive decision on the evaluation of the educational program was made in case the educational program meets all the criteria for levels “A” or “B”.

If eligibility for level “A” was established for four or more criteria, the decision was made with the definition of “exemplary” on the educational program. The decision on conditional (deferred) assessment of the educational program was made in case the level “E” was met in relation to one or two criteria and none of the criteria was found to be level “F”. A negative decision was made in case one criterion was found to be level “F” or one level “E” was met for three or more criteria.

The evaluation of the programs was carried out by expert evaluation, and every expert set the score independently and independently (using the Delphi method) at the stage of forming opinions on each sub-criterion. The expert gave 1 point if his/her answer was “YES”, 0 points for the answer “NO”, and if it was not possible to answer clearly the expert put 0.5 points. The score for each criterion (Table 1) was defined as the arithmetic mean of the scores obtained for the sub-criteria. The evaluation was performed on the assumption that all criteria are equivalent.

Table 1. Example of EP evaluation by an expert group

Criterion	Evaluation of 12 experts by criteria												The sum of points
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
1	1	1	1	1	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0	0	0	0	6
2	1	1	1	1	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0	0	0	0	6
3	1	1	1	1	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	8
4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	10
5	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	1	1	1	1	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	8
6	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
7	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	8
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	4

At the stage of generalization of evaluations by criteria, the method of commissions was used. The received result in points, quantity of answers on 0,5 points was declared and the final estimation on criterion was discussed. At the same time, the commission applied the method of SWOT-analysis (division of factors and phenomena into four categories: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats), assessed strengths and weaknesses, risks and new

opportunities. Conditions for forming an assessment and establishing the level of compliance with EP are given in table 2.

Based on the results of the research, generalized findings concerning evaluation of educational programs were obtained (Table 3).

Table 2. Conditions and criteria for the evaluation of educational programs

Condition (answer)	Correspondence of the probability of the event	The sum of points*	The result of SWOT-analysis	Level of compliance
exactly "NO"	0 ...0,29	0...3,5	Most weaknesses and threats	F
rather "NO"	0,30...0,50	3,6...6	Most weaknesses, threats are not significant	E
rather "YES"	0,51...0,79	6,1...9,5	Most of the strengths are new opportunities	B
exactly "YES"	0,80...1,00	9,6...12	Most of the strengths and new opportunities	A

* – based on the number of experts from 12 people

Table 3. The results of Evaluation of L-Courses Educational Programs

Criteria	MEI, L-course							
	NDUU					NAA		
	L-4	L-3	L-2 (Army)	L-2 (Air Force)	L-2 (Navy)	L-1B (infantry)	L-1B (armed)	L-1B (artillery)
1	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
2	E	E	E	E	E	B	B	B
3	E	E	E	E	E	B	B	B
4	B	B	B	B	B	E	E	E
5	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
6	B	B	B	B	B	A	A	A
7	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
8	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B

The results analysis of the EP evaluation shows that all programs are conditional (deferred) assessment. The shortcomings are systemic in nature for each MEI, all criteria could be grouped according to the level of assessment for each MEI. This fact became a prerequisite for the division of the expert group into subgroups in the development of individual sections (areas) of the examination and the generalization of recommendations and reporting.

Following the work of the expert group, the Report of the international expert group was developed in the following sections:

1. Organization of educational activities for the implementation and implementation of educational programs

2. Structural organization of the military education system and management process
3. Personnel management of the military education system
4. Management of educational activities and material resources
5. Development and integration of professional standards into the military education system
6. Integration of the military education system into the personnel management system

The report sets out more than 60 observations and recommendations for the MEI. All observations, reservations and recommendations are summarized in six strategic priorities for urgent implementation.

Priority 1. In order to best establish an objective and merit-based talent management system, it is recommended that AFU establish capabilities/organizations under a separate command other than the Single Services to perform the following functions; personnel selection, recruiting, military personnel production planning, individual training and education, military occupational structure management, professional development, career management, succession planning, terms of service, compensation and benefits, pension, moral and welfare, military dress policy and associated personnel research.

Priority 2. To make full use of the L-courses as the backbone of officers' professional military education, the MoD and General Staff must embed them into a coherent and comprehensive officers' professional development programme based on a future officer vision and also tightly integrate it with the career management system in the AFU. The ongoing reforms in the Human Resources Management System (HRMS) and PME reforms must be kept in sync. Selection for L-courses must be reviewed and placed in a clear and logical career and professional development framework less dependent on the arbitrary decisions of single service commands and military units. Successful completion of all L-courses must be established as prerequisites for further career progression, and appointments to positions immediately after such completion must be clearly linked with the demonstrated performance and achieved results on the courses.

Priority 3. To pursue cultural and attitudinal changes to become more interoperable with NATO counterparts, AFU should develop a strategic document (e.g. Future Officer Vision 2030) that links officer standards with Ukraine's interoperability with NATO and translates this into clear competencies, skills, values and ethos to be developed in future AFU officers as well as embrace a new distribution of responsibilities between officers and NCOs.

Priority 4. Organize a workshop to identify, discuss and agree upon the MoD-General Staff level Education and Individual Training (E&IT) functions, processes, and corresponding structure within a new C2 structure, with a follow-on review of the entire hierarchy of E&IT documents (their place and purpose in the overall system, their ownership and their content) and their linkages with the strategic documents governing HRMS.

Priority 5. To increase interoperability with NATO:

Apply the existing NATO standards – Generic Officer PME reference curriculum and NATO operations planning standards (TLP, MDMP, JOPP, Comprehensive Operations Planning Directive (COPD)) for corresponding levels – to more than 70% of the L-courses curricula as early as possible. DEEP program expertise should be used to, first, review all L1-4 course curricula and standardise NATO operations planning training requirements for each PME institution; next, develop all needed training material, and then prepare selected instructors to deliver the courses (at the final stage instructors are to be mentored and assessed if they are able to deliver the instruction on their own).

Proceed with implementation of NATO standard planning and decision-making procedures and creation of corresponding staff organizations in the AFU (BN, BDE HQs, etc) within the C2 project that is synchronized in time with personnel training for new structures, while communicating to the students and graduates of L-courses that their knowledge of these procedures and other NATO standards will be in high demand in the process and also as a result of the ongoing reforms. Create opportunities (e.g. through distance learning) for the recent graduates to refresh and improve their knowledge of NATO procedures already after graduation.

Priority 6. Once pilot L-courses are implemented and PME project results are evaluated (i.e. in 2024-2025), review the purpose and optimize the structure and personnel of the PME institutions in order to consolidate resources necessary to support the requirements of the AFU and to better target the needed sets of knowledge and competences for the future officers and NCOs.

Additionally, partial reports have been prepared for NDUU and NAA. The reports contain the results of program evaluations, detailed observations and recommendations on the activities of the expert group at NDUU and NAA.

Conclusions

Thus, the experiment on the implementation of institutional audit processes into the military education system of Ukraine for validation of intermediate results of piloting of a new professional military education system was conducted on a national basis for evaluating the quality of educational programs in the field of higher education and NATO Directives. The results of the experiment confirm that institutional audit is a common element on the way to achieve compatibility of personnel training processes on quality principles.

The application of the institutional audit tool needs further development and improvement. The main directions are:

- determination of value (importance factor) of the EP evaluation criteria;
- substantiation of the number of experts in the group (subgroups) and the procedure for forming expert groups;

- bringing the elements of PME audit to the requirements of the BI-Strategic Command Directive 075-007
- introduction of a training system to experts;
- use of the Delphi method and the commission method to summarize the results;
- application of the SWOT-analysis method to determine the final score.

Besides, another research area is formation of structural units in the MEI, which will be responsible for development and analysis of curricula in higher education (according to national higher education standards) and PME (according to NATO standards), involving employees of these units.

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INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT OF PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION: A WAY TO QUALITY ASSURANCE ACCORDING TO NATO STANDARDS

SUMMARY

The article highlights the obtained results on conducting an institutional audit of the professional military education system in educational institutions of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The directions of further development of institutional audit mechanisms for evaluation of professional military education quality on the way to achieving compatibility of training processes according to NATO standards were substantiated. The results of the experiment confirm that institutional audit is a common element on the way to achieve compatibility of personnel training processes on NATO quality principles. The authors of the article use a system of general scientific and special methods of theoretical and empirical research (systematization, generalization, systematic approach) and methods of expert evaluation.

KEY WORDS: professional military education, institutional audit, educational program, quality

