EKKA

ESTONIAN QUALITY AGENCY
FOR HIGHER AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Report for Institutional Accreditation and Quality Assessment of Curriculum Groups in Vocational Education

The Estonian Military Academy

Euroopa Liit
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Eesti
tuleviku heaks

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1. Introduction

Institutional accreditation

'Institutional accreditation' is the process of external evaluation which assesses the conformity of a University or higher education institution's management, work procedures, study and research activities and environment to both legislation and the goals and development plan of the higher education institution itself. This is feedback-based evaluation in which an international assessment panel analyses the strengths and weaknesses of the institution of higher education based on the self-assessment report of the institution and on information obtained during the assessment visit, providing recommendations for improvement and ways of implementing them.

The goal of institutional accreditation is to support the development of strategic management and quality culture that values learning-centeredness, creativity and innovation in the higher education institutions (**HEIs**), as well as to increase the societal impact of education, research and development delivered by the HEIs.

HEIs are assessed according to twelve standards of institutional accreditation. Assessment focuses on the core processes of the HEI – learning and teaching, research, development and creative activities, and service to society – as well as on strategic management of the organisation and resource management. The learning and teaching process is examined in more detail under five standards (study programme, teaching staff, learning and teaching, student assessment, and learning support processes). Throughout the assessment process, there is a focus on academic ethics, quality culture and internationalisation.

The Institutional Accreditation Report consists of two parts: (1) evaluation of twelve institutional accreditation standards, and (2) a report on quality assessment of a sample of study programmes.

Educational institutions must undergo institutional accreditation at least once every seven years based on the regulation approved by EKKA Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education Guide to Institutional Accreditation.

Assessment of the quality of vocational training (hereinafter assessment of quality) is an external assessment, based on an internal assessment, conducted by external independent assessors once in every six years. In the course thereof the performance and sustainability of teaching and education, including the development of curriculum, learning and teaching, leading and management and the use of resources shall be evaluated.

The objective of the quality assessment of vocational education (VET) is to foster the development of learning-oriented school culture and to increase the reliability of vocational education.

Quality assessment of vocational education provides an opportunity:

- For the school to get feedback about the quality of the study process and recommendations to develop it and to use the results of an independent external evaluation for the school's strategic management.

- To inform interested groups (learners, labour market, state, the society in general) about how well vocational education meets the national demands, objectives of development plans, labour market needs and expectations of the learners.

Quality assessment of vocational education focuses on the studies.

Vocational educational institutions must undergo quality assessment of curriculum groups in VET at least once in 6 years based on the regulation approved by EKKA Quality Assessment Council for VET.

The institutional accreditation of the Estonian Military Academy (**EMA**) took place in November 2020. The Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education (**EKKA**) composed an international expert panel, which was approved by the higher education institution. The composition of the panel was thereafter approved by the order of EKKA director.

The following persons formed the expert panel:

Robin Bryant, Chair	Professor of Criminal Justice & Policing, Canterbury Christ Church University, UK
Malena Britz	Pro Vice-Chancellor and Head of Research, Swedish Defence University, Sweden
Brigita Mass	Student, Tallinn University of Technology (TalTech); TalTech Student Parliament member, Estonia
Petteri Rokka	Colonel G.S, Planning Manager, Finnish War Veterans Federation; Mentor, Finnish National Defence University, Finland
Aivar Salekešin	Colonel, Mission of Estonia to the UN, Military Adviser, Estonia
Lauri Tabur	Former Rector of the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences, Public Sector Reform Expert, The Estonian Center of Eastern Partnership, Estonia
Toomas Lents	Major, Staff Officer Personnel Department, Air Force Headquarters, Tallinn, Estonia

Assessment process

The assessment process was coordinated by EKKA staff – Ms Tiia Bach and Ms Reet Taimsoo.

The work of the assessment panel started on the 14th of September 2020 when the panel received the Self-Evaluation Report of the EMA and began preparation for the site-visit. After an initial preparation phase the distribution of tasks between the members of the assessment panel was determined. An introduction to the Higher Education System as well as the assessment procedures were organised for the whole panel via Zoom by EKKA staff. Members of the team agreed the overall questions and areas to discuss with each group during the site visit and to a detailed schedule for the site visit.

During the 3-day site visit, from Tuesday 10th to Thursday 12th of November 2020, the panel held meetings with representatives of the Estonian Military Academy as well as external stakeholders.

On Friday, 13th November 2020, the panel held a meeting, during which the findings of the panel were discussed in detail and the structure of the final report was agreed. Findings of the team were compiled in a first draft of the assessment report including the evaluation of 12 accreditation standards and the assessment of both higher education programmes as well as the vocational education programme.

In finalizing the assessment report, the panel took into consideration comments made by the institution. The panel submitted the final report to EKKA on 8 January 2021.

Main impressions of the self-evaluation report and the visit

The Panel were provided with copies of the Academy's Self-Evaluation Report (SER) well in advance of the visit and in plenty of time to prepare questions for the EMA. The SER also formed the basis for discussion amongst Panel members and EKKA staff.

We found the SER to be a logically structured, well-written and detailed report. Further documentation was hypertext linked to the main body of the SER and we found that in all cases the links 'worked'. However, some of the subsidiary documentation was in the Estonian language (most however was either in English, or a translation was subsequently supplied by the Academy when requested).

The analysis carried out by the EMA in producing the SER itself and the care it took in its writing was of a high standard: largely evidence-based, self-critical and explanatory. The task of the panel was made much easier as a result. There was also clear evidence of wide participation in contributing to the SER from both within the Academy and from stakeholders. This participation was confirmed during the site visit and with the interviews we conducted.

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic three of the members of the accreditation panel were unable to be physically present for the visits to the EMA. Instead they joined meetings using the cloud-based video conferencing service 'Zoom'. This worked well in the main but on occasions the acoustics in rooms at the Academy meant that dialogue had to be repeated. For practical reasons the three members were unable to join the physical tour of the facilities (although the EMA provided a video alternative).

The visit was well prepared by the Academy and the Panel felt welcomed. The various groups the Panel met during the three days were well prepared for the meetings, and the discussions were held in a friendly and open atmosphere. An additional meeting with interviewees was offered when the Panel expressed the need for more input. We would like to thank the contact persons of the Academy for providing the requested information and materials to the Panel both before and during the visit.

Information about the Estonian Military Academy

The Estonian Military Academy (hereinafter referred to as the EMA or the Academy) is a state-owned professional higher education institution for national defence operating under the purview of the Ministry of Defence (MoD). As such, the EMA is the only higher education institution that focuses on the areas of military science and military leadership, as well as the development of Estonian military terminology. Due to its legal status as a state-owned education institution, the EMA's activities are also governed, in addition to the MoD, by the Ministry of Education and Research (MER).

As a professional higher education institution, **the EMA organises studies at the first level (professional higher education) and second level (master's studies) of higher education and at the level vocational education**, taking guidance from the Higher Education Act, Higher Education Standard, Vocational Educational Institutions Act and Vocational Education Standard, as well as other related legislation. Furthermore, as a structural unit of the Estonian Defence Forces (EDF), the EMA operates on the basis of the Estonian Defence Forces Organisation Act and other relevant regulations guaranteeing training for officers and non-commissioned officers of the EDF and Estonian Defence League (EDL).

The EMA is not an autonomous legal entity, instead it functions as an integral part within a larger mechanism under the direct command of the Commander of the EDF. The Academy's operations are governed by the Statutes of the EMA (approved by the Minister of Defence), and its activities take guidance from a comprehensive Development Plan (approved by the EMA Governing Council). Supervisory control over the EMA is conducted in accordance with the regulations of the MoD and the EDF with a view to the 10-year National Defence Development Plan (NDDP) which is, in turn, implemented through National Defence Action Plans (NDAP) and related investment plans. The EMA budget constitutes a part of the EDF's overall budget, adopted in the framework of the EDF's Annual Plans. The EMA is responsible for contributing to national military defence through the development unit "Leadership", i.e. military leadership education and training.

The EMA staff comprises both civilian and military personnel in core and supporting functions. The EMA's distinctive role comes across in the double duties assigned to staff members who are also in active service, i.e. in addition to their peace-time duties, they also have a war-time structural designation, and the performance of operational readiness duties constitutes part of their core functions. In addition, they are also subject to the EDF's personnel rotation plans (i.e. reassigned every 3 to 5 years), enabling the EMA to bring the best of state-of-the-art practices into its degree studies.

The EMA's mission is to prepare active service members for leadership positions in the EDF and to develop military science with a view to ensuring the sustainability of the EDF. To that end, the EMA focuses on the following core functions:

- higher education and vocational training;
- in-service training;
- national defence related research and development activities.

The EMA's degree studies constitute an integral part of the EDF's education and career system for officers and non-commissioned officers, and upon graduation, all EMA students are offered positions in the EDF or the EDL in accordance with the EDF's military service model.

The EDF's education and career system is divided into formal education (degree studies) and military training. The four-level military training system is based on levels of military command, and different levels are acquired cumulatively via in-service training courses. The EMA curricula for vocational and professional higher education cover 1st level military training (platoon and company level), whereas Master's studies cover the 2nd level (battalion and brigade level). The EMA does not offer 3rd and 4th level military training (i.e. joint operations, and strategy studies), and the EDF's education and career system does not prescribe formal education (i.e. degree studies) at those levels.

However, since the EMA offers integrated degree studies (i.e. academic studies are combined with in-service training), those active service members who have completed their degree studies at the EMA, are in compliance with both the formal education and military training requirements of the EDF education and career system.

At the level of higher education, Estonian citizenship is one of the main prerequisites for admission, whereas at the level of professional higher education, admission requirements include completion of conscript service, and concluding an active service contract with the EDF. All EMA students receive a salary and academic studies constitute their main service duty. As a result, EMA degree students are both active service members and students.

Historical Overview and Main Developments

The EMA was originally established as the Estonian National Defence College (ENDC) on 29 August 1923 by government resolution. Originally based in the capital city of Tallinn, the ENDC operated from 1 October 1923, nowadays celebrated as the anniversary of the EMA, until it was shut down by the occupying Soviet authorities in 1940. After Estonia regained its independence in 1991, the government re-established the ENDC on 17 March 1998 as a higher education institution for the preparation of officers for the EDF. Initially, the ENDC opened its doors in Tallinn but was relocated to its current location in Tartu in the autumn of 1999.

Over the years, **the organisational structure of the EMA has undergone several changes** with a view to better meeting the EDF's needs and educational quality standards. In recent years**, the most significant developments include** incorporation of the EDF NCO School (training centre for non-commissioned officers (NCO)) and reserve platoon commanders, as well as the expansion of two specialised subdivisions: the Department of Applied Research responsible for the EDF's R&D activities, and the EMA's War and Disaster Medicine Centre (WDMC) responsible for organizing military and disaster medicine training.

On 1 May 2019, the changes related to the EMA's most recent structural reform entered into effect, resulting in the optimisation of the EMA's organisational structure, functional coverage, and areas of responsibility with a view to strengthening and enhancing the achievement of strategic objectives laid down in the Academy's development plan. Additionally, the institution officially commenced operations under **a new name –** the **Estonian Military Academy**.

During the past 10 years, R&D activities have gained increased significance as one of the focal points of the EMA's activities. The **EMA's degree programmes** have also undergone significant changes. Initially, the EMA offered degree studies only at the first level of higher education (i.e. professional higher education); the Masters' degree programme was added in 2005, and **vocational education** in 2010. At the level of professional higher education, the original military leadership curriculum was initially offered only for the land forces specialty, with air force and navy curricula added in 2008 and 2010, respectively. At the level of vocational education, students have the option to undergo professional specialisation training for specific service branches. In addition, the target groups for training courses offered by the EMA's WDMC have also expanded and diversified considerably. Furthermore, the general developments at the EDF have led to the introduction of various in-service training courses, coming to represent a significant part of the EMA's core activities.

As of the beginning of 2020, the EMA oversees all degree studies and in-service training for EDF officers and non-commissioned officers, as well as the coordination and, in part, also the implementation of R&D activities in the area of government under the purview of the MoD.

The EMA's Vision and Objectives

According to the EMA's vision statement as outlined in the EMA Development Plan for 2015-2022, the Academy shall be a professional higher education institution focused on national defence education, as well as a research institution that plays a central role in the development of military science and military leadership, and the promotion of military culture within the EDF, as well as in relations with its allies.

The EMA Development Plan outlines three strategic areas – leadership, education and training, and **R&D activities** – together with objectives and accompanying operational principles for each area.

- **Leadership** shall create conditions for the achievement of the objectives set for educational and training activities, as well as R&D activities.
- **Education and training** shall prepare future military leaders for the EDF and the EDL based on a common military culture in accordance with national defence requirements.
- **R&D activities** shall support the development of military capabilities, and the shaping of military scientific thinking in the EDF through the coordination and implementation of defence-related R&D activities.

The Organisational Structure of the EMA

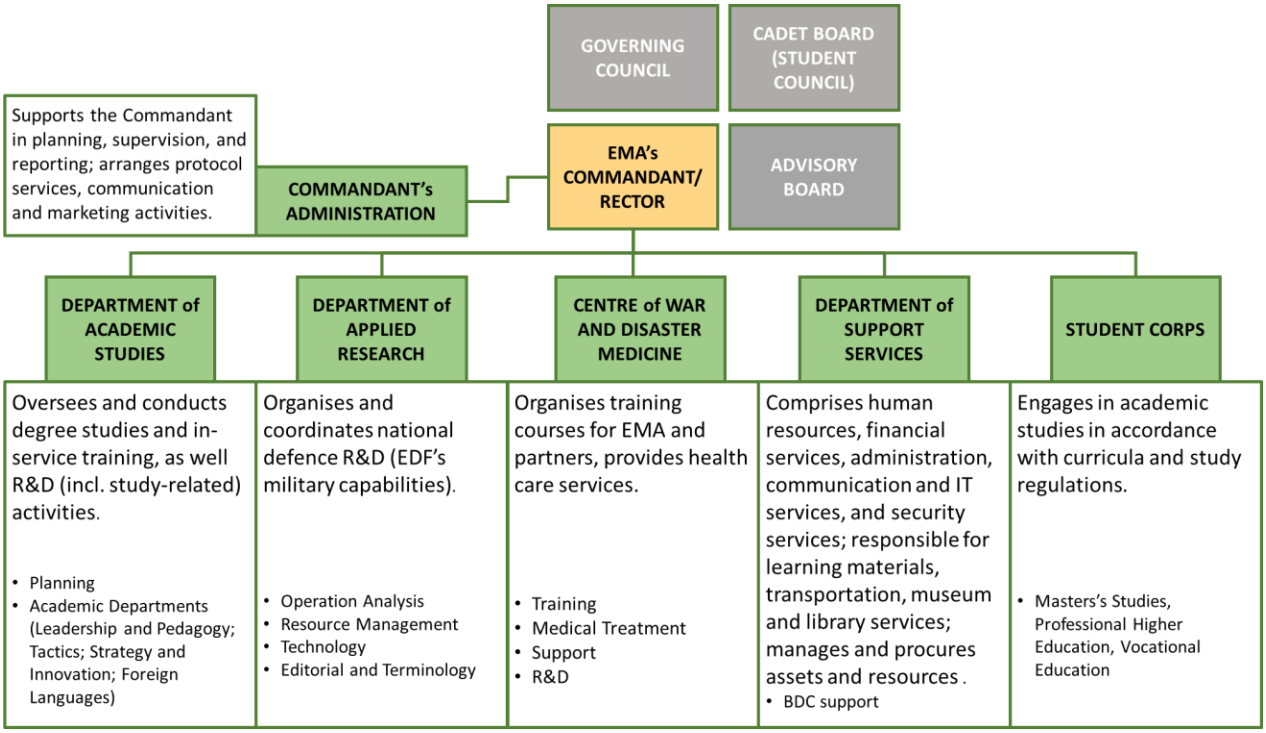
The EMA is headed by the **Commandant** who, under the Higher Education Act, acts in the competence of a rector. The EMA Commandant oversees the operations of six structural subdivisions operating in accordance with the Statutes of the EMA. The Commandant (Rector) and the heads of the EMA subdivisions comprise the **Rectorate**, an advisory body to the Commandant, which may also include, subject to the Commandant's decision, other experts from the EMA.

The EMA's highest collegial decision-making body is the **Governing Council**, which acts on the basis of its rules of procedure and comprises 21 members (i.e. in addition to the Commandant, also the heads of the EMA subdivisions, as well as elected representatives of the academic staff and students). The EMA Governing Council oversees the work of **three permanent committees** (academic, study, and

development) that are tasked with giving feedback and recommendations on the Governing Council's draft documents falling under their respective purviews.

The EMA **Advisory Board**, whose members are appointed by the Minister of Defence is an advisory body connecting the Academy with the larger society. The activities of the EMA **Advisory Board** are governed by its rules of procedure, and it is convened by the Commandant at least once per year. The current EMA Advisory Board, appointed in 2019, comprises eight members representing the following organisations: MER, MoD, EDF (2), EDL, Estonian University of Life Sciences, Estonian Academy of Security Sciences (EASS), and the National Centre for Defence Investment.

Figure 1. The organisational structure of the EMA and the functions of its subdivisions as of 1 May 2019



Source: Self-Evaluation Report of the EMA

Overview of students and staff of the EMA

Table 1. Overview of EMA students from 2015/16 to 2019/20.

		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Master's degree studies (MA), level 7	admitted	10	14	14	13	24
	total number	21	24	32	33	40
	men/women	21/0	24/0	32/0	33/0	39/1
	discontinued	0	0	4	1	0
	completed	12	6	8	13	13
Professional higher education (PHE) (land force), level 6	admitted	48	45	43	35	44
	total number	121	120	121	114	103
	men/women	118/3	117/3	116/5	108/6	98/5
	discontinued	28	13	9	12	8
	completed	35	31	35	31	33
Professional higher education (PHE) (air force), level 6	admitted	8	9	-	7	6
	total number	26	24	17	18	15
	men/women	23/3	22/2	16/1	18/0	14/1
	discontinued	2	3	0	1	2
	completed	9	6	7	9	-
Professional higher education (PHE) (navy), level 6	admitted	6	5	-	7	5
	total number	25	24	12	12	11
	men/women	24/1	23/1	12/0	11/1	10/1
	discontinued	7	1	0	1	0
	completed	9	7	7	2	2
Total number of students in professional higher	**total number**	**172**	**168**	**150**	**144**	**129**
	men/women	165/7	162/6	144/6	137/7	122/7

education	**completed**	**53**	**44**	**49**	**42**	**35**
Total number of students in higher education (MA+PHE)	**total number**	**193**	**192**	**182**	**177**	**169**
	men/women	186/7	186/6	176/6	170/7	161/8
	completed	**65**	**50**	**57**	**55**	**48**
Vocational education, level 5	admitted	60	54	65	65	70
	total number	66	57	71	69	71
	men/women	65/1	55/2	69/2	66/3	71/0
	discontinued	1	0	5	5	0
	completed	62	51	61	53	70

Source: Self-Evaluation Report of the EMA

Table 2. EMA staff profile and statistics from 2015 to 2020.

	2015 (31.12)	**2016 (31.12)**	**2017 (31.12)**	**2018 (31.12)**	**2019 (31.12)**	**2020 (31.03)**
Total number of staff positions indicated in the EMA staff composition table	213	213	214	217	239	231
Total number of EMA staff	**210**	**203**	**202**	**197**	**204**	**205**
% of EMA staff composition table	78 %	95 %	94 %	91 %	85 %	89 %
share of men	65 %	66 %	66 %	64 %	61 %	62 %
share of women	35 %	34 %	34 %	36 %	39 %	38 %
Total number of academic staff	**78**	**78**	**78**	**70**	**73**	**75**
active service members	42	44	45	48	46	49
employment contract staff	36	34	33	22	27	26
staff with doctoral degrees	9	8	8	5	10	10
men	56	60	57	52	54	53
women	22	18	21	18	20	22

Total number of administrative and support staff	**132**	**125**	**124**	**127**	**131**	**130**

Source: Self-Evaluation Report of the EMA

Sources of evidence for this report

Throughout this accreditation report, judgements are based upon evidence, made available to the assessment team through various means including the written SER of the Academy, statistics concerning student progression and interviews with staff, students and employers. For the sake of brevity, the following abbreviations are used to indicate the source of evidence used to substantiate claims and recommendations:

Key to evidence

E: interviews with employers and other external stakeholders

M: interviews with management staff

S: interviews with students

A: interviews with alumni

T: interviews with teaching staff

R: inspection of resources (e.g. library, laboratories)

P: interviews with programme managers and developers

AR: interviews with applied research active staff

SC: interviews with student support and student corps staff

SER: Self-Evaluation Report

2. Main changes based on the recommendations of the previous institutional accreditation

In 2013 EKKA undertook the first institutional accreditation assessment of the Estonian Military Academy (at the time called the Estonian National Defence College, see section above). On receipt of the 2013 accreditation report the EKKA Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education outlined nine areas for improvement. These are given in Table 3 below.

During this current (2020) accreditation visit opportunities were provided to note the response of the Academy to the 2014 areas for improvement and a summary is given in the second column of Table 3.

Table 3. Areas of improvement outlined by the EKKA Quality Assessment Council for Higher Education during previous accreditation, and developments and changes made by EMA based on the panel's recommendations.

Areas for improvement (EKKA 2014, based on 2013 accreditation visit)	**Changes made by the EMA, as noted by this accreditation Panel**
Improve the EMA's self-reflection and development capacity by inviting representatives from outside the EMA to serve on the Academy's boards and committees.	There are now external members of EMA Boards and committees (SER, E). For example, a representative of the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences is a member of the EMA Board (E).
Foster short-term international mobility, both outgoing and incoming, among the EMA teaching staff.	Participation in the Erasmus + programme (SER, AR), a new staff position created (SER, M) and an increase in mobility (SER).
Develop performance indicators to better assess the effectiveness of the EMA's functional operations and the use of financial resources.	Performance indicators have been developed (SER) and appear to have been put into operation (M, P).
Develop, in collaboration with the EDF, a more proactive strategy for promoting military professions among women in order to increase the proportion of female students at the EMA.	A more proactive strategy has been adopted (E, SC). Since 2013 there has been an increase in the proportion of female students at the EMA (SER). However, the proportion remains small (at just over 4%, data derived from SER, Table3, p. 12).
Prepare an action plan to include English-language subjects in the EMA curricula in order to better prepare EMA graduates for work in international military organisations.	Action plan was prepared (SER) and English language modules introduced (S, T, P).

Offer EMA students information about future service positions well in advance in order to benefit their career planning.	This is undertaken with the EDF HQ (SER, E) but may require further development.
Devise measures to increase the opportunities for increasing the exposure of its staff and students to the international environment, and to offer talented students opportunities for studying abroad.	The EMA now has an internationalisation policy (SER appendix) and there is much evidence of international cooperation opportunities for staff (T, SER, AR) although increasing student participation has proved more challenging.
Prepare a detailed implementation plan for the EMA R&D strategy, which identifies in more detail the key research areas, as well as setting out the related personnel policy, milestones, and the allocation of requisite funds.	A number of plans and strategies were made available to the Panel (SER appendices). The EMA has secured additional funding to undertake research (SER, AR).
The EMA must (1) encourage staff members with primarily military backgrounds to acquire basic research skills, and (2) to strengthen cooperation with universities and other research institutions.	A successful PhD studentship scheme in conjunction with the EDF is in operation (SER, T, AR). There are research workshops available to staff (SER, T).

3. Summary of the institutional accreditation findings

General Findings

The Panel found the Estonian Military Academy to be an outward looking institution, well-led and efficiently and effectively managed. Given its important role in supporting the defence of the nation State, particularly in terms of preparing the military leaders of the future, it was reassuring to find this to be the case.

We were impressed with the dynamism, enthusiasm and dedication of all the staff of the Academy, from the Commandant, the Rectorate, the teaching staff, the support staff but most importantly of all, from the students themselves.

The Academy has ambitious plans for the future in terms of new infrastructure resources and they have responded well to the extraordinary challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic.

There exist excellent relationships between the Academy, the MoD, the EDF and other stakeholders and partners, including NATO. These included the securing of resources, including new buildings; the provision of work-based placements; curriculum development advice; international cooperation and support for PhDs for full-time military employees.

The EMA has recently successfully implemented a major organisational restructuring programme, and this appears to be working well with evidence of increased efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

The EMA continues to play an important role in developing military science, and in conducting applied research for the EDF and other stakeholders. Examples include Academy-led research into such diverse areas such as ‘wargaming’ and the development of leadership competencies.

Programmes at the Academy are generally well-managed and teaching staff are committed to supporting students and facilitating student-centred learning.

Resources provided for students and staff are generally good and where these are in need of improvement the Academy has plans to do so. Assessment of students, whilst generally fair and objective, may need greater articulation between courses within programmes.

There appears to be a much-improved research environment established in recent years (e.g. seven externally funded projects), widening involvement by staff but at the same time ‘publishing less but publishing better’ (to increase impact factor rating).

Both informal and formal supportive links exist between staff across the Academy –a genuine ‘open doors’ culture. For example, there appears to be a direct access for all members of staff to their managers including at the Commandant level.

The EMA provides an impressive 'service to society', particularly through the Academy's Centre of War and Disaster Medicine and the provision of foreign language training for the broader Estonian military community. The Academy's War History collection and Military Museum are also noteworthy.

Strengths

The Panel commends the following as strengths and good practices of the Academy:

1. A successfully implemented new management and organisational structure, demonstrating the capability to reform and develop.
2. The close planning cooperation with the executive management of the main employer, the EDF. There is also a clear connection between the objectives of the EMA and the priorities of the NDAP (National Defence Action Plan) with regard to necessary investments in the future.
3. The EMA has an ambitious view on internationalisation and has formulated an internationalisation policy with clear objectives and priorities. It is a strength to have such a clear policy to aid future efforts at internationalisation within the Academy.
4. The Academy's teaching staff are creating an open and enthusiastic learning atmosphere to serve self-managing students. There is a personal learning environment for students, which benefits from the favourable teacher-student ratio and the campus model. The teaching staff and other Academy staff are motivated and keen to be involved with students and to coach them through their studies. Further, the EMA offers its teaching staff opportunities for self-development, especially the pedagogical skills of the active service member teachers. The EMA also has the active support of the EDF regarding support systems for students.
5. Some of the teachers contributing to Academy programmes are from the EDF land forces elite unit and they are considered the best practitioners in Estonia in their field. They are a valuable asset in supporting student learning.
6. There is an overarching and extensive system of curricula development in place, which is also fully utilized. EMA staff, the students and the most important stakeholders are comprehensively involved in the development process of the curricula.
7. The Library, taking into account the size of the EMA, is well-stocked in the military sciences.
8. There is widespread engagement with research throughout the Academy, including both military and civilian staff. The EMA has very clear research objectives, established in collaboration with stakeholders and an efficient and effective system for enacting research projects. The EMA encourages this in a number of proactive ways, including research 'boot camps' and through providing funding for international conferences. The Academy has also developed significant expertise in attracting external funding to support its research and development activities.
9. The increasing uptake of EMA in-service training courses by EDF personnel, which suggests the Academy is meeting an important need.

Worthy of Recognition

The EMA plays a very active role in 'Services to Society' offering a very valuable service to cognate professions and more widely within Estonian society. The EMA's contribution to

medical training is particularly impressive. The Panel judges that the 'Services to Society' standard achieved by the Academy is worthy of recognition.

Areas of concern and recommendations

The Panel offers the following recommendations to the Academy to address the areas of concern identified during the assessment visit:

1. The move to a 10-year Development Plan will need careful monitoring (for example, through an annual review to be considered by the Rectorate) as military leadership training needs to respond quickly to changing national and international circumstances.
2. Internal parallel information channels show signs of 'overloading' staff and students at the EMA. The Academy could consider reassessing its internal information channels to determine which are strictly necessary, how information flows through the system and how information might be better targeted to particular groups (e.g. students).
3. Quality assurance measures need to be introduced amongst the Academy's staff (both full-time and part-time teaching staff; civilian and military teachers) and students, so that those at the Academy better understand their role in fostering the effectiveness of the quality system and students understand their role within the quality improvement process. We note that many useful quality assurance tools have been introduced in recent years, and the Academy should now encourage and monitor the use of these tools, so that all members of the EMA (both students and staff) become part of creating the quality culture.
4. The current approach to checking for plagiarism appeared 'piecemeal' to the Panel and it was unclear which written assignments were checked, on which courses. Procedures for suspected plagiarism at the level of course management need to be developed in a transparent manner and carefully explained to all staff and students e.g. submission of all theses; students on all courses (that involve written assignments) to submit work for checking. Checking for academic misdemeanours should also be extended, as a matter of routine, to possible Estonian translations of unattributed English-language publications.
5. There is scope for greater collaboration with the EDF on a more consistent approach to assessment - for example, common marking criteria. The Academy should find appropriate ways to ensure that the marking of students' assessed work is more consistent among both the staff of the EMA as well as visiting staff.
6. There is a lack of direct evidence that study programmes support creativity and entrepreneurship, as claimed by the Academy. We recommend that the EMA more extensively develops students' creativity, entrepreneurship and development of the transferable and also other general competencies in the study programmes. Further, we recommend that more of students' study should relate directly to the development of leadership skills in the PHE curricula.
7. There is a lack of an overarching monitoring of the balance and form of assessment of students at the programme level. The Academy should consider introducing a programme-level mechanism (e.g., a meeting of programme teaching teams before teaching commences) to enable this.
8. Increasing 'cultural awareness' as an internationalisation aim is not clearly articulated within the EMA. We recommend that the Academy considers ways in which to better implement and measure the achievement of this aim. We also recommend that the Academy deliver courses

(or parts of courses) in English in order to permit exchange with students from foreign defence academies; this would increase both internationalisation and cultural understanding.

	conforms to requirements	partially conforms to requirements	does not conform to requirements	worthy of recognition
Strategic management	☒	☐	☐	☐
Resources	☒	☐	☐	☐
Quality culture	☒	☐	☐	☐
Academic ethics	☒	☐	☐	☐
Internationalisation	☒	☐	☐	☐
Teaching staff	☒	☐	☐	☐
Study programme	☒	☐	☐	☐
Learning and teaching	☒	☐	☐	☐
Student assessment	☐	☒	☐	☐
Learning support systems	☒	☐	☐	☐
Research, development and/or other creative activity	☒	☐	☐	☐
Service to society	☒	☐	☐	☒

3.1 Strategic management

Standard:

Development planning at the higher education institution is purposeful and systematic, involving various stakeholders. The higher education institution regularly evaluates the achievement of its stated objectives and the impact of its activities.

Guidelines:
The HEI has formulated the objectives and key results for its core activities – learning and teaching; research, development and creative activities, and service to society – taking into account national priorities and the needs of society, focusing on its strengths and reducing unnecessary duplication both within the HEI and throughout higher education in Estonia. The HEI is managed in accordance with its mission, vision and core values, as well as objectives set out on the basis of those principles. Achievement of the objectives and effects of the activities are evaluated regularly. Creativity and innovation are supported and given value in both core and support activities. Membership of the HEI (including students), as well as external stakeholders, is involved in developing and implementing the HEI's development plan and action plans. The HEI members share the core values that serve as a basis for the institution's development plan.

Evidence and analysis

The Estonian Military Academy (EMA) is the sole State provider of higher education and research in the field of national defence in Estonia, focusing on providing education and training in military leadership and developing military science through national defence related research and development activities. This uniqueness means that the EMA carries a singular and significant national responsibility and the strategic management of the organisation is of particular importance.

Due to its legal status as a state-owned education institution, the EMA's activities are also governed, in addition to the MoD, by the Ministry of Education and Research (MER).

However, the EMA is not autonomous but is itself governed by the Commander of the Estonian Defence Force (the EDF), working within a statutory context approved by Estonia's Minister of Defence (SER). This is the current (2020) context in which the EMA formulates its strategic objectives, particularly in terms of meeting national priorities.

The EMA is managed by the Commandant (equivalent to a Rector), and the heads of five subdivisions (the Department of Academic Studies, the Department of Applied Research, the Centre of War and Disaster Medicine, the Department of Support Services and the Student Corps) (SER). The Commandant and the heads of the five subdivisions inter alia, constitute an advisory body called the Rectorate (SER). The Rectorate meets on a weekly basis to discuss the 'current state of affairs' (SER, p. 20) and progress made with the Annual Directive (see later). The Heads of the five subdivisions also hold weekly meetings, which the Commandant also attends (SER).

In principle the EMA's activities are guided by its Development Plan (currently the 2015-2022 plan, SER) which also includes its mission, vision and core values. A number of stakeholders are involved in

the construction and approval of the EMA Development Plans, including the Rectorate, Academy staff, the EMA Governing Council, the Estonian Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (MER) (SER, E, M). The current Development Plan is also aligned with the National Defence Development Plan for 2013 -2022. This allows for greater synchronization of Academy and national defence planning. In summary there are 14 outputs, 59 activities and 143 indicators envisaged in the Plan (SER).

The EMA budget constitutes a part of the EDF's overall budget, adopted in the framework of the EDF's Annual Plans (SER, M). The Academy is responsible for contributing to national military defence through the development unit 'Leadership', i.e. military leadership education and training.

The EDF Annual Plan specifies the number of state-commissioned study places across the EMA programmes, R&D priorities, and other assigned duties (e.g., responsibilities in EDF exercises, participation in the EDF parades, etc.) with respective budget allocations (SER, M). The process of preparing the EDF's Annual Plan is based on the principle of reciprocity, i.e. the Academy gives feedback and negotiates resources for the performance of assigned duties and reports back the developments to the HQ on a quarterly basis (E, M, SER).

The EMA is currently (Autumn 2020) in the process of drafting its next Development Plan. It is envisaged that this will cover a 10-year period (SER, M). One possibility is to attempt to improve the in-built flexibility of the new Plan and devolve the selection and approval of indicators to the EMA Governing Council alone (SER). This would mean that coordination with the national Ministry would not be required. The Panel supports this ambition.

The Commandant's Annual Directive sets out a year's specific Development Plan objectives in terms of priority areas and activities (SER). In 2021 to 2022 an objective for EMA curriculum development is expected to be the development of 'values-based professional attitudes' (SER, p. 21). The Directive also sets out the financial budget for the year (within limits prescribed by the Estonian Defence Force HQ, SER). Progress towards the Directive's objectives are reviewed at the 6-month and 12-month stages (SER).

From mid-2019 the EMA embarked upon a significant structural reform, one of whose aims were to 'optimise' the Academy's management functions and to increase its efficiency in achieving its objectives (SER, p. 22, M). This reform included a reduction in the number of subdivisions within the EMA and a consolidation of some central functions.

The Commandant manages the relationships the Academy has with a wide range of stakeholders, including with EDF management, organizations and employers; the Estonian MoD; the MER; the National Centre for Defence Investment; Estonian professional education institutions and universities; foreign military academies and universities and NATO/EU defence research institutions (SER, M, E).

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, the Panel concludes that the EMA conforms to the requirements of this Standard. Development planning at the Academy is purposeful and systematic, involving various stakeholders, especially its main stakeholder the EDF. The Academy regularly evaluates the achievement of its stated objectives and the impact of its activities having an internal system in place for evaluation administered by a quality assurance specialist.

Strengths

- A successfully implemented new management and organisational structure, demonstrating the capability to reform and develop.
- The close planning cooperation with the executive management of the main stakeholder, the EDF.

Area of concern and recommendations

- The move to a 10-year Development Plan will need careful monitoring (for example, through an annual review to be considered by the Rectorate) as military leadership training needs to respond quickly to changing national and international circumstances.

Opportunity for further improvement

- As some of the Navy and Air Force subjects are outsourced to the TalTech Maritime Academy and Aviation Academy and the quality of teaching (arrangements) in this cooperation has been also a subject in earlier assessments (EKKA 2017), it might be reasonable to consider the greater involvement of these Academies into the planning model of the EMA.

3.2 Resources

Standard:

The higher education institution develops its staff and manages its physical and financial resources in a purposeful, systematic and sustainable manner. Internal and external communications of the higher education institution (including marketing and image-building) are targeted and managed.

Guidelines:

The HEI has an efficient staff development system. The principles and procedures for employee recruitment and development are based on the objectives of the HEI's development plan, and are fair and transparent. The career model of academic staff motivates talented young people to start their academic careers, creates opportunities for progress, and ensures sustainability of the academic staff. The principles for employees' remuneration and motivation are defined, available to all employees, and observed.

Allocation of the HEI's financial resources is based on the objectives of its development plan. The management and development of its infrastructure (buildings, laboratories, classrooms, IT systems, etc.) are economically feasible. Sufficient resources are available for updating the infrastructure for education and research, and/or a strategy exists enabling the HEI to acquire them.

A sufficient amount of textbooks and other learning aids are available, they are of uniformly high quality and accessible.

Publicly offered information about HEI's activities (including study programmes) and the findings of external evaluations is correct, up to date, easily accessible and understandable. The HEI has a system to popularise its core activities and academic career opportunities. The HEI has a functioning system for internal and external communications, relevant to the target audiences. The HEI members are informed of the decisions relevant to them in a timely manner.

Employee satisfaction with management, working conditions, information flow, etc., at the HEI is surveyed regularly and the survey results are used in quality improvement activities.

Evidence and analysis

Human resource management at the EMA is guided by the regulations established in a policy area under the purview of the MoD, as well as those of the EDF (SER). The Academy is also represented on the EDF working group for Human Resources Strategy for 2020-2026 which helps the EMA to remain up to date with the needs of the EDF and therefore to improve their own allocation of human resources. The qualification requirements with job descriptions and duties of the EMA teaching staff are approved by the Commandant on the grounds of the Council's decision (SER, hypertext links to associated documentation).

The EMA has three different types of staff members: officials (under the Civil Service Act), active service members (under the Military Service Act), and regular employees, including teaching staff (under the Employment Contracts Act) (SER, M). Active service members are subject to a mandatory staff rotation which influences their overall availability and as a consequence sets restrictions on how long they remain at the Academy and hence how far they are able to further develop teaching skills (SER, T). However, from the interviews we conducted it is understood that the EMA is included in the staff rotation process in order to make sure candidates accepted as staff members at the Academy have sufficient basic didactic skills from the outset (SC).

Development interviews are conducted with all staff members annually in order to assess their needs for additional development and gather overall feedback about the management of EMA (SER, T). Interviews have detailed base guidelines from the EDF.

Through our Panel interviews with different members of staff it can be concluded that the overall availability of resources for developing skills is sufficient and staff feedback on overall work is being centrally analysed by the Academy (T, AR). This is also supported by the employee satisfaction survey results which give an overall 3.4 points on a 4-point scale (SER).

Each year among the teaching staff 'best lecturers' are officially recognised by the EMA, informally the 'best colleague' also receives recognition.

Financial resources planning rests on the National Defence Action Plan (NDAP). The EMA budget has gradually increased since 2017, and it is clear in the NDAP for 2021-2024 that this trend will continue (SER, M).

The EMA main building in Tartu has three large classrooms (30-65 students), 11 medium-sized classrooms (12-25 students), an auditorium, a museum, a library, offices for staff, a canteen and a

cafeteria (SER, Table 12, p. 31; R). There are also three student dormitories and Simulation Centre (which also has dorm rooms) in Tartu (ibid). In addition there is a study building at Võru (with four medium-sized classrooms (20-30 students), one large classroom (120 students), one computer class (30 workstations), dorm rooms accommodating up to 235 people and equipment warehouses (SER, Table 12, p. 31) and an outdoor firing range at Paluküla (with 12 firing ranges) (ibid). However, neither of the latter two facilities were physically visited by the Panel (although the Academy made available a pre-prepared video of the resources) .

Amongst other objectives, the National Defence Action Plan stipulates that additional infrastructure will be built for the Academy in Tartu (SER). The Panel heard about these plans (SER, M, T, P) which include two new study buildings in Tartu (total area of approx. 10,000 m², SER, p. 30) to be built by 2023. The EMA's vocational training will be moved to one of these buildings (see section 3.2 of this report) and the other will house the Academy's War and Disaster Medical Centre (WDMC), the EDF's Medical Training Centre, and the EDF Health Centre (SER, p.30). The plans impressed the Panel as being ambitious but feasible and bringing all of the Academy's activities together in one city will have significant benefits.

During our Panel interviews (T, S, E) a case was made for the new buildings to include space for students to rest, relax and interact with their peer group. Informal communication and socialisation of this sort is often an important feature of student learning and assimilation within the culture of an organisation. Similarly, provision for staff 'break rooms' in the new build might also lead to an increase of levels of satisfaction of staff with the Academy, which has declined in recent years (SER, p.27). The Panel also heard reports of poor ventilation in some of the existing building stock (S, T).

The Academy's IT systems appear to be fully supporting the study process and internal communication, and a variety of digital solutions are utilised (SER, T, S). However, there was some sense (gained from the interviews, S, T) of a possible 'information overload' caused by frequent communication using different channels.

In terms of externally-facing communication, the Academy collaborates with other national defence agencies to produce 'mobile friendly' websites and social media channels to share EMA related information of interest to target audiences.

A notable innovation, at least for those students based in Tartu, was the rapid issue of laptops and supporting software to allow blended learning during the initial stages of the Covid-19 pandemic (SER, S, T). The Panel were impressed with the speed and ability of the Academy to react in this way, moving study materials online after adapting them for the new medium of delivery. Inevitably, some subjects lent themselves more readily to blended learning than others (S) and the Academy, in common with many HEIs, no doubt gained valuable experience.

The EMA's library consists of a collection of resources that fully supports the security and military studies of PHE and VET students, including textbooks and journals (SER, R, S). Many of these resources are also accessible through electronic means. The Academy is also responsible for the study materials made available to EDF personnel, through the latter's intranet. The Panel heard about the security measures put in place to ensure the protection of sensitive materials (particularly those accessed online and which relate to military technology) and were reassured by the answers received (S, T, P, AR).

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, the Panel concludes that the EMA conforms to the requirements of the 'Resources' Standard. Our judgment is derived from the detailed description and explanation given in the SER and confirmed through interviews conducted by Panel members.

The EMA has sufficient resources regarding both financial and tangible assets. This is illustrated by the ability and drive of the Academy in rapidly acquiring and issuing laptops to facilitate blended learning for all students in a short period of time when the Covid-19 pandemic necessitated this.

In the human resources field there is a strong connection with the EDF to manage staff's mandatory rotation and the needs of the EMA. The Academy also puts significant effort into the evaluation and development of their staff, which was confirmed through interviews.

The need for renovation at the institution is visible, especially regarding classrooms and the ventilation system, but fortunately the NDAP means that additional infrastructure for the EMA will be built in Tartu.

Strengths

- There is a clear connection between the objectives of the EMA and the priorities of the NDAP (National Defence Action Plan) with regard to necessary investments in the future.
- Active service members as teaching staff are subject to the EDF annual rotation plans based on the EMA's requirement and this helps guarantee sufficiently well qualified staff for the Academy.

Areas of concern and recommendations

None noted.

Opportunities for further improvement

- Consideration be given in the new infrastructure planned in Tartu for facilities for staff and students to be able to recuperate, meet and hold discussions in informal settings.
- Internal parallel information channels show signs of 'overloading' staff and students at the EMA. The Academy could consider reassessing its internal information channels to determine which are strictly necessary, how information flows through the system and how information might be better targeted to particular groups (e.g., students).

3.3 Quality Culture

Standard:

The higher education institution has defined the quality of its core and support processes, and the principles of quality assurance. In the higher education institution, internal evaluation supports strategic management and is conducted regularly at different levels (institution, unit, study programme), the findings of internal and external evaluations are analysed and quality improvement activities implemented.

Guidelines:

Members of the HEI have agreed upon definitions for the quality of their core and support processes and are guided by them in their daily work. The HEI develops and publicises its policies and procedures for internal quality assurance (internal evaluation) and conducts regular internal evaluations, which take into account, inter alia, the standards set out in this Guide, and incorporates feedback from its members and/or from external experts. In the course of internal evaluations, peer learning, comparisons with other HEIs regarding their results and means for achievement, as well as a sharing of best practices take place, among other things.

Internal evaluation is based on the following key questions in quality management: What do you want to achieve, and why? How do you want to do it? How do you know that the activities are effective and will have the desired impact? How do you manage the quality improvement activities?

Regular reviews and enhancements of study programmes ensure their relevance, including their compliance with international trends.

Evidence and analysis

Members of the Panel note that compared to previous 2013 evaluation, the EMA has achieved significant progress in creating its quality assurance system (M,T). The EMA has defined the quality of its core and support processes and the principles of quality assurance through its development plan which is published openly on their public web page and in SharePoint Intranet (M).

The Academy's core and support processes were approved by the EMA Governing Council in 2013 and quality indicators for these are defined in the six -year development plan (2015-2022) and are revised and measured once a year (SER). As of 2019, the EMA used 77 performance indicators in its development plan to measure its various operations.

To systemize the measurement of quality indicators a feedback plan was developed in 2016, which constitutes the basis for the EMA's annual plan for internal surveys (M). EMA internal surveys include annual satisfaction surveys conducted among staff and students and satisfaction surveys conducted every fourth year among alumni and employers (SER). Between 2015 and 2019 there were extra surveys, not foreseen in the feedback plan, e.g., a 'summer academy' satisfaction survey (SER). In addition, various internal audits have been conducted by the MoD, and the EDF (e.g., in 2020, audits

of the conducting of misdemeanour procedures, and of implementation of satisfaction survey results) (SER).

Within the EMA, internal evaluation supports strategic management and is conducted regularly at different levels facilitated by the Academy's quality assurance specialist (SER, M). The findings of internal and external evaluations are regularly analysed and quality improvement activities implemented. In order to ensure effective coordination of quality assurance between its subdivisions, the EMA has designated responsible owners for both core and support processes (M). The EMA has also introduced the 'supported-supporting', and 'enablers-multipliers' concepts so that the owners of core processes, who are supported, may also serve supporting functions as well and vice versa. Multipliers in this context are underlying principles and functional services, that are not directly responsible for core processes and do not constitute critical support, but nevertheless enhance their quality, such as values, traditions, media etc (SER).

In order for comparison with other HEIs regarding their results and means for achievement, the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences (EASS) and Tartu Health Care College (THCC) have been chosen by the academy due to their similar status as state-owned professional higher education institutions that operate on the basis of state-commissioned study and research orders (SER). A representative of the EASS is also a member of the EMA Advisory Board together with seven other members/beneficiaries.

Regular discussions with heads of other European military training institutions are also carried out in various multilateral formats to ensure study programs comply with international trends in military education (M).

Bearing in mind the above it can be concluded that the processes of quality assurance are well described in the EMA and several significant steps have been made to introduce necessary quality assurance measures. However, the extent to which quality is a daily concern for everyone beyond staff with designated roles in the system remained unclear to the Panel members even after the site visit.

In the interviews with students and staff of the EMA several items related to their experience and roles in quality assurance were discussed (T, S). Discussions led members of the Panel to a conclusion that EMA should continue promoting the introduced quality assurance measures amongst its staff and students so that staff members would better understand their role in fostering effectiveness of the quality system (T). Likewise, students could better understand their opportunities in influencing the quality improvement process in the EMA (S).

The Academy has introduced many useful formal quality assurance tools in recent years, but now the EMA should go further to implement and monitor also the use of these tools so that all members of the EMA (both students and staff) would be part of creating the quality culture (M, S). The Academy has in its own self-assessment identified as one of their priority areas that 'The EMA must motivate its PHE students to engage more actively in giving feedback on their studies' (SER, p. 37). For example, a better understanding by students of the ways in which they contribute to the quality culture might also increase student understanding of their role in providing feedback on studies, which could improve the proportion that give feedback after each course.

Another aspect of quality culture that is important for the cultural life of the Academy and perhaps not only processes that create that culture, are academic ethics. When asked about this, some

respondents in interviews (T, M) referred to a military culture of honour. However, this might not be exactly the same thing as academic ethics, and a deeper understanding of what quality in the Academy's 'daily work' means. It follows that an understanding of academic ethics and a living quality culture in a sense are prerequisites for each other.

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, the Panel concludes that the EMA conforms to the requirements of this Standard. The Academy has made significant progress in defining the quality of its core and support processes, and the principles of quality assurance as well as practically introducing several necessary quality assurance measures, creating a good basis for building a quality culture.

The quality of the EMA's core and support processes have been well described and the principles of quality assurance laid down. However, from the discussions with members of the institution the Panel concluded that not all members of staff of the Academy are fully aware of the principles and therefore there is no guarantee that these principles are applied in their everyday work.

Discussions with members of the EMA and with students led members of the Panel to a conclusion that EMA should continue promoting the introduced quality assurance measures amongst its staff and students so that staff members would better understand their role in fostering effectiveness of the quality system and likewise students would understand better their role in the quality improvement process in the EMA.

Strengths

- The use of international comparisons to ensure that Academy programmes remain up-to-date and staff are cognisant of trends elsewhere.
- The principles of quality assurance in the Academy are clearly articulated.

Area of concern and recommendations

- The quality of the EMA's core and support processes have been well described and the principles of quality assurance laid down. However, from the discussions with members of the institution, the Panel concluded that not all members of staff of the Academy are fully aware of the principles and therefore there is no guarantee that these principles are applied in their everyday work. Quality assurance measures need to be introduced amongst the Academy's staff (both full-time and part-time teaching staff; civilian and military teachers) and students, so that those at the Academy better understand their role in fostering the effectiveness of the quality system and students understand their role within the quality improvement process. We note that many useful quality assurance tools have been introduced in recent years, and the Academy should now encourage and monitor the use of these tools, so that all members of the EMA (both students and staff) become part of creating the quality culture.

Opportunities for further improvement

None noted.

3.4 Academic ethics

Standard:

The higher education institution has defined its principles for academic ethics, has a system for disseminating them among its members, and has a code of conduct including guidelines for any cases of non-compliance with these principles. The higher education institution has a functioning system for handling complaints.

Guidelines:

The HEI values its members and ensures that all its employees and students are treated according to the principle of equal treatment.

Employees and students of the HEI are guided by the agreed principles of academic ethics in all their activities.

The HEI respects fundamental values and policies of research set out in the document, 'Research Integrity', issued jointly by Estonian research institutions, the Estonian Academy of Sciences, the Estonian Research Council and the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research.

The HEI supports its students and teaching staff in their understanding and responding to ethical issues. Teaching staff and students do not tolerate academic fraud, including cheating and plagiarism, and they will act immediately upon any such occurrence.

Management of complaints from HEI members (including discrimination cases) is transparent and objective, ensuring fair treatment of all parties.

Evidence and analysis

The status of the EMA, as a sole provider of leadership education and training for the three military services of Estonia, means that the maintenance of academic ethics amongst its staff and students needs to be of the highest order.

The academic ethics principles of the EMA are informed by the Estonian Defence Force's (EDF's) own core values and *Code of Ethics* (M, E, SER). The EDF core values, as written on the website https://mil.ee/kaitsevagi/uldinfo/kaitsevae-eetika/ are 'ausus, vaprus, asjatundlikkus, ustavus, koostöövalmidus'. The Academy's English-language translation of these terms is 'honour, courage, professionalism, loyalty, cooperation, openness' (footnote 22, p. 21, SER). However, it would appear that this is a partial mistranslation. In the Panel's opinion the correct translation of the EDF core value 'ausus' should be 'honesty' not 'honour'.

The EDF values of particular relevance to those of the Academy would appear to be those of 'honour/honesty', 'courage', 'professionalism' and 'openness'. For example, the EMA explains that academic freedom links to both 'courage' and 'openness'.

Regular seminars are organised by the EMA for both staff and students that address academic ethics, for example, in terms of plagiarism and honesty in feedback (SER, T, P).

On the formal level the academic conduct of students is governed by the EMA's Study Regulations, in addition to its Conditions and Procedures for Admission to and Exclusion from Degree Studies (SER). The EMA Academic Council has a role in determining the outcome of any alleged cases of academic misconduct (SER, P).

There have only been three detected cases in five years where students have been found to have used unauthorised materials in the course of assessment (SER, T). This low number may of course be due to a number of reasons, including the integrity of the students themselves, the ethos promoted and reinforced by the Academy or because of an inability to successfully detect.

Since 2015 Urkund software and other automated means have been used to check for plagiarism (SER, R). In terms of the application of this software it is unclear whether these checks are limited to the to the latter stages of the PHE and Masters' level only. The checking of theses appears to be limited to those where a supervisor has suspicions concerning authenticity or copying and this triggers a check using Urkund (R). We understand that theses submitted before 2015 have not been added to the Urkund database (R).

There are procedures in place for both staff and student complaints (SER). On average there are about two complaints from staff each year (based on data in SER, p. 39), about 45% of which are upheld (ibid).

In terms of student complaints, it would appear that most are dealt with at the informal level, although this is not clear (SER). Formal resolution of student complaints is via appeal to the EMA Appeals Committee. On average there is just over one complaint per year heard by the Appeals Committee; most are not upheld (SER). The Committee has representatives from the student body, the EDF and another HEI. However, it is the Commandant who has the final decision (SER, p. 40) and on at least one occasion the Commandant has overturned the decision of the Appeals Committee (Table 16, row four, p. 40, SER).

Conclusions

On balance there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the EMA conforms to the requirements of the standard of 'Academic ethics'. In particular, the need to maintain standards of 'honesty' was well understood by all concerned (e.g., in terms of plagiarism; S, T). However, the values and ethics of the Academy might be better articulated with those of its primary professional partner, the EDF. (We acknowledge however that the Academy is an educational and training institution whereas the EDF is an active service force). It is also the case that the checking for plagiarism and other forms of academic misdemeanour seems largely limited to the Masters' level and then only if the supervisor decides this is required (T, R).

Strengths

None noted.

Areas of concern and recommendations

- The current approach to checking for plagiarism appeared 'piecemeal' to the Panel and it was unclear which written assignments were checked, and on which courses. Procedures for suspected plagiarism at the level of course management need to be developed in a transparent manner and carefully explained to all staff and students, e.g. submission of all

theses; students on all courses (that involve written assignments) to submit work for checking.

- Checking for academic misdemeanours should be extended to possible Estonian translations of unattributed English-language publications.

Opportunities for further improvement

- After clarification of the meaning of 'ausus' (honesty in English), to agree with staff, student representatives and stakeholders how the ethics and values of the Academy and the EDF articulate.
- The current (2020) practice at the Academy is for decisions made by the Appeals Committee to be subject to the approval of the Commandant of the EMA (SER, p. 40). The Academy should reconsider the grounds under which the Commandant should retain the right to overturn decisions of the Appeals Committee.

3.5 Internationalisation

Standard:
The higher education institution has set objectives for internationalisation and assesses the attainment of these objectives regularly. The higher education institution has created an environment that encourages international mobility of students and teaching staff, supporting the development of learning, teaching and RDC activities, as well as the cultural openness of its members and Estonian society in general.

Guidelines:
The HEI creates opportunities for international student exchanges by offering study programmes and/or modules taught in English. The learning environment at the HEI supports internationalisation and cultural openness.
Recognition of qualifications and recognition of prior learning and work experiences for student admission and programme completion are in accordance with the quality requirements set by the HEI, are systemic and consistent with the expected learning outcomes and support international student mobility.
The organisation of studies at the HEI facilitates student participation in international mobility. The HEI has agreements with foreign higher education institutions and, through international exchange, sends its students abroad to study and undertake practical trainings, providing comprehensive support for this. Members of the teaching staff encourage students to participate in international mobility.
International lecturers participate in the process of teaching, including supervision of doctoral theses.
The HEI supports and recognises the participation of its teaching staff in international teaching, research or creative projects, as well as their teaching, research or creative work and personal development which are performed at HEIs abroad.

Evidence and analysis

The objectives for internationalisation are set out in the EMA's internationalisation policy (SER). Specific indicators are, according to this policy, stipulated in the development plan which covers eight years, and specified on a yearly basis by the Commandant (SER, M).

The SER (on p.41) shows that development and cooperation meetings, mobility (both for students and teaching staff), participation in exercises, in-service training, and participation in conferences/seminars are monitored on a yearly basis. Most of these activities show an increase in the years 2016-2019 (SER). However, 2020 is a very unusual year due to the Covid-19 pandemic and therefore low figures for this year cannot really be commented on. (Some planned but cancelled activities are described in the SER.)

The Academy's primary goals in internationalisation policy are to increase the cooperation and competitiveness of EMA students and teaching staff, through acquiring new skills in military studies and related areas (SER, p.40) - in which case, military studies offered abroad and participation in international exercises should be proportionally transferred into credits in alignment of EMA curricula in order to promote internationalisation of studies.

The position of an 'external relations specialist' has been created in order to support mobility of students and teaching staff which indicates the Academy's increased focus on this area of internationalisation (SER, T, P).

In some aspects of internationalisation clear target rates are set, e.g., 35% mobility of civilian teaching staff (SER). In 2019 this target was reached with 52% participating in international cooperation (SER, p.41).

One question with regard to possibilities for, or perhaps the result of, internationalisation are foreign language skills. Teachers pointed out in one of the interviews that they were surprised that first year students did not have better skills in the English language (the same was noted during the interviews with students) at the same time as some of the students suggested that there should be more focus on English language skills in teaching and that perhaps more courses on the Master's programme should be conducted in the English language (S, T).

However, some students commented that they had successfully employed English language training received at the Academy during military exercises (S). Joint international exercises and study visits (also mentioned in the interviews with students, S) have been effective tools of internationalisation, perhaps more so than student mobility where students study abroad for a longer period of time (SER, S). One example of such a course is 'Infantry Officers Winter Basic Module' that the EMA will offer in 2021 as part of military mobility within EU defence academies (SER, T).

In the SER mobility of teaching staff, internationalisation of studies, increasing cultural awareness are highlighted as the aims of internationalisation. However, these seem very general in their character whereas the Academy's internationalisation policy is much more specific with regard to objectives and priorities of internationalisation. The extent to which these specific objectives are reached, or which strategies are used to reach these objectives, are less clear (SER, T, P).

Conclusions

The Panel found that the EMA conforms to the requirements of the internationalisation Standard. It has an internationalisation policy with clear priorities, and a number of activities that contribute to internationalisation, for example courses in military English which help prepare students for international exercises that they participate in.

The Academy also engages foreign lecturers to contribute to programmes and offers a course within the EU EMILYO (Exchange of Military Young Officers) framework. However, internationalisation could be strengthened even further through clearer connections between the internationalisation policy and the activities undertaken in areas of internationalisation.

Strength

- The EMA has an ambitious view on internationalisation and has formulated an internationalisation policy with clear objectives and priorities. It is a strength to have such a clear policy to aid future efforts at internationalisation within the Academy.

Areas of concern and recommendations

- Increasing 'cultural awareness' as an internationalisation aim is not clearly articulated within the EMA. We recommend that the Academy considers ways in which to better implement and measure the achievement of this aim.
- Deliver courses (or parts of courses) in English in order to permit exchange with students from foreign defence academies; this would increase both internationalisation and cultural understanding. One aspect of this could be to increase the number of expert foreign lecturers to contribute at the Masters' level.

Opportunities for further improvement

- Consider developing, in the next academic year, joint international student programs with other Estonian HEIs, such as the EASS, EAA and EMARA, and especially in the CIMIC area.
- A clearer connection could be developed between priorities of internationalisation that are found in the internationalisation policy (the "why") question, and the actual activities taking place. This would make the strategy of internationalisation clearer. For example, a plan of action where priorities in the internationalisation policy are connected to specific actions could be developed. Such a plan of action would also make it possible to see the efforts of internationalisation as a whole, where students are exposed to internationalisation in their studies according to a logic of progression.

3.6 Teaching staff

Standard:
Teaching is conducted by a sufficient number of professionally competent members of the teaching staff who support the development of learners and value their own continuous self-development.

Guidelines:
Members of the teaching staff engage systemically in development of their professional and teaching skills, improve their supervision competence, and share best practices with one another.
Teaching staff's participation in research, development and/or creative activities supports the teaching process and ensures competence for the supervision of students' theses.
Members of the teaching staff collaborate in fields of teaching, research and/or creative work within the HEI and with partners outside the HEI, e.g. with field practitioners, public sector organisations, companies, other research and development institutions, and lecturers from other Estonian or foreign higher education institutions. Qualified visiting lecturers and practitioners participate in the teaching process.
When assessing the work of teaching staff (including their periodical evaluations), the effectiveness of their teaching as well as their research, development and creative work is taken into account, including student feedback, the effectiveness of their student supervision, development of their teaching and supervisory skills, their international mobility, and their entrepreneurial experience or other work experience in their fields of speciality outside the HEI.

Evidence and analysis

The EMA's competent and enthusiastic teaching staff has a key role in creating a high-quality learning experience and enabling the acquisition of knowledge, competencies, and skills. This is reflected in the atmosphere of the Academy and experiences of the students as described to the Panel (SER, S, T, P). Overall, the number of teaching staff is satisfactory: the ratio of the number of the students and teaching staff is 2.8 at the EMA (whereas at the EASS it stands at 8.9 and at Tartu Health Care College 17.4 in November 2019) (SER). The staff student ratio at the Academy may appear to be 'generous' but is actually due to the extensive number of field practices and overall practical nature of studies at the EMA and also low number of students per curricula (SER, P).

There is only a comparatively small number of active service member teaching staff with doctoral degrees, and some lecturers responsible for PHE teaching (for example in the Air Force PHE curriculum) only have a PHE themselves (Appendix to the SER).

Military teachers' pedagogical skills are considered by some as lower than civilian staff (S). This is perhaps not unexpected, given the mandatory 25% rotation of military staff every year. There is however a clear improvement notable after 2013, following a previous accreditation visit recommendation to establish a new post for developing didactic skills (SER).

Each new member of staff is allocated a mentor, and they are also encouraged to attend the lectures of more experienced members of staff (M). Many Academy teaching staff we interviewed praised the so-called 'KäRu' (Käramise Ruum in Estonian) – meeting sessions once a week to discuss pedagogical and other matters among the teaching staff (T).

The EMA is appropriately sized and, as a result, able to provide a supportive learning environment where staff can do their jobs effectively (SER, T, S). Also, the students appear satisfied with the learning environment of the Academy (SER, S, T, P).

There are no regulations at the EMA concerning how many hours teachers teach nor a weekly requirement (M, T). Teachers' contracts however do include research, which they can choose to link with their teaching and supervising responsibilities. EMA academic staff also offer topics to their students for research purposes (T, AR). For example, there is cooperation with the Estonian defence industry, where Academy Masters students are involved in the more theoretical research activities (T, AR).

In practice some members of staff concentrate on research, others concentrate on teaching (T, AR). The 'non researchers' keep on top of their subject largely through scholarship rather than research, e.g., reading journals (T). There is perhaps more scope for interaction between the teaching staff and the Department of Applied Research: the former undertaking more applied research and the latter more teaching (T, AR).

At the EMA the teachers are 'close' to the students and they adopt a successful role in student-centred teaching (SER, S, T, P). According to the students, teachers are helpful and students receive a positive response when they seek clarification (S). For example, teachers are open to extra questions and they are willing to answer specific questions after class has ended (S). Furthermore, if the student needs more help or does not understand something then the teachers invariably take time to support them (S).

There is only one dedicated navy and only one air force teacher/expert in the EMA, and this might prove problematic in the future (T, P). Moreover, these two positions appeared to change after 2018 to the role of 'teacher-curriculum manager' for the Navy and Air Force PHE programmes respectively. They are teaching on average 20 ECTS (Air Force) and teaching and curating curricular subjects on average 33 ECTS (Navy) per year (SER). One of their duties is also to give feedback on the syllabi of subjects taught by the EAVA and TalTech EMarA prior to their approval (SER), which altogether makes an extensive workload with no replacements directly available (T).

Active service members as teachers in EMA need to share their time between military duties and academic studies, therefore not all that is planned is achieved (P). Military duties are considered paramount and participation in conferences is sometimes therefore limited (P, E), which makes military staff academic progression more challenging.

A fine example of teaching staff development was a Covid-19 lockdown situation in Spring 2020. It was somewhat chaotic at the beginning (as perhaps was to be expected), and it took for a while for teachers to get used to the new situation, but worked out very well overall (S, T). This experience developed teaching staff, as they had to find new ways of teaching, employing internet based blended learning (T, P). Moreover, teaching found that the situation demanded changes in syllabi (P). It should

be acknowledged that whilst not all teachers were comfortable with transitioning to more online teaching and learning, many adapted successfully through learning from colleagues (S).

Staff foreign language ability was reported to the Panel as not being monitored systematically (P, SC). Language comprehension can be an issue for international lecturing, but is not considered to be a major problem within the EMA, because they manage the international Winter Warfare Course and lectures in the Baltic Defence College very well already (SC). English language comprehension level depends very much on an individual, but everyone can attend the English language courses offered by the Academy. However, some teachers appear to have little time to participate in such courses (T).

There are ample opportunities for international events available, which consist mostly of seminars, courses and visits, rather than teaching itself (SER). Lack of conference participation opportunities was also reported by some teachers, although some of them attended twice a year NATO conference (T). There is a course in Sweden, where traditionally the EMA staff has participated (T). Mobility grants are available, for example lecturing in Lithuanian and Ukrainian academies (SER). A visit to Latvian military academy for lectures and joint seminars was planned, but it was postponed because of COVID-19 (SER, T). The EMA collaborates with other academies, e.g., with the EASS and EAVA (M). Furthermore, there is cooperation with other colleges and universities in place in Estonia and abroad (AR). Overall, the system is considered supportive and there are sufficient self-development opportunities (AR).

A personnel assessment system is in place in the Academy. There are two types of development interviews (SER, P). Every year an evaluation interview is conducted and every three years an accreditation interview. These interviews can help identify career development pathways (SC). Assessment is conducted by a superior and this system is considered effective, because subordinates can always request what they need and the superior is in a position to provide help or support. From the manager's viewpoint, they can suggest special skill sets, when looking broadly at a member of staff's performance and possibilities to develop (AR). To emphasize, the most important part of assessment is considered to be student feedback (T).

Overall, the academic level of civilian teaching staff was considered better than military teaching staff, especially when marking objectivity and feedback was concerned (A). Teachers outside the Academy were found, in the main, to be very professional in their outlook (e.g. in Psychology). Some students would like to see more involvement by overseas lecturers (A, S). Also, they would like to see more guest lecturers, which would further improve the quality of studies (S). Over time, the number and role of visiting lecturers has increased substantially (from 67 in 2015 to 150 in 2020) with an increased contribution as well, to more than 1500 hours in total (SER).

The number of applications per vacant academic post is only 4 to 1 due to the high number of universities in Tartu and at same time the small population size of Tartu (SER, SC). Therefore, this application ratio is not considered unduly low by the EMA itself (SC).

The EMA has established and adheres to a clear induction program for new teaching staff, especially for the active service members who are deployed to teach at the Academy (T, SC). The aim is to ensure pedagogical skills by developing them from the outset. There are a wide variety of courses and training provided for those teaching in higher education for the first time. First of all, 'Learning and Teaching in PHE' and the first two months are reserved for training as minimum before one can start teaching

(SC). New staff also undertake a summer academy to develop their teaching skills. There are instructor courses available, for example to learn about self-management. The EMA endeavours to take a modern approach to teaching and implement changes from the 'bottom-up' not only 'top-down' (M). Overall, we are confident in concluding that the EMA is promoting and providing opportunities for the professional development of teaching staff (SER, S, T, P).

The atmosphere among the teaching staff is committed to development and the Academy is promoting scientific action to strengthen the link between education and research. Finally, it was clear to the Panel that the EMA actively encourages the use of innovative teaching methods and new technologies (SER, S, T, P).

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, the Panel concludes that the EMA conforms to the requirements of this standard. Teaching is conducted by professionally competent members of the teaching staff who support the development of learners and value their own continuous self-development.

Strengths

- There are sufficient suitably qualified numbers of teaching staff, and they are committed and proud to serve in the Academy.
- The teaching staff is creating an open and enthusiastic learning atmosphere to serve self-managing students. There is a personal learning environment for students, which benefits from the favourable teacher-student ratio and the campus model.
- The teaching staff and other Academy staff are motivated and keen to be involved with students and to coach them through their studies.
- The EMA offers its teaching staff of opportunities for self-development, especially the pedagogical skills of the active service member teachers.
- Some of the teachers contributing to Academy programmes are from an EDF land forces elite unit and they are considered the best practitioners in Estonia within their field. Consequently, they are a valuable asset in supporting student learning.

Area of concern and recommendations

- Whilst the number of academic staff available to the EMA is sufficient, there is currently only one designated full-time navy and one air force teacher/expert at the Academy. We recommend that the EMA reviews this, particularly in the light of curriculum and programme development. Engaging more Navy and Air Force teachers/specialists in the EMA for more extensive curricula development would prepare Land Forces-, Navy- and Air Force officers better for a joint military environment.

Opportunities for further improvement

- Since the EDF HQ J1 appoints the active service members as teachers for the EMA, there could be a system to choose the most suitable as a teacher (e.g., mapping against the specialist requirements of the Master's students).

- To further reduce the number of responsible lecturers whose most advanced academic qualification is a professional higher education award and continue the process of having more active service members with doctoral degrees.
- To integrate more the teachers and best practitioners in Estonia into the EMA academic environment and to establish strong connections with the teaching at the Academy.
- To locate additional teaching opportunities abroad and foster this as an opportunity to develop skills and practice in the English (and other foreign) language for the Academy teaching staff.
- For mutual benefits and to create synergy, teaching staff to be more involved in R&D, and researchers more in teaching - that is, more of a bidirectional flow.
- To identify why staff job satisfaction has declined within the EMA although some conditions of service, for example wages, have improved. Further, to consider and implement the best response to these findings.

3.7 Study programme

Standard:

Study programmes are designed and developed while taking into account the expectations of stakeholders, higher education and professional standards, and trends in the relevant fields. The objectives of study programmes, modules and courses and their planned learning outcomes are specific and coherent. The study programmes support creativity, entrepreneurship and development of other general competencies.

Guidelines:

In planning study programmes and student places, the HEI pursues its objectives and the needs of the labour market, and takes into account national strategies and the expectations of society. The planned learning outcomes are in accord with the requirements for the corresponding level of the Estonian Qualifications Framework.

Expected student workloads defined in the study programmes are realistic and consistent with the calculation that 1 ECTS credit equals 26 student learning hours.

Theoretical learning and practical learning are interconnected. The content and organisation of practical training support the achievement of learning outcomes of the study programme and meet the needs of all parties.

Evidence and analysis

The EMA's study programmes are based on the need of the Estonian Defence Forces (EDF) and the EDF plans for, and requests of the Academy, the required number of students' admissions for all programmes (SER, E). The interviewed stakeholders were generally satisfied with the results (E).

Given that the PHE curricula consist of between 19% and 38% of the practical placement (nationally at least 15% is required), the stakeholders can play an important role in students achieving the learning outcomes through this means (SER, T, S, P).

Employers and other stakeholders pointed to the high professional and academic level of Academy students, expressing confidence that they are able to lead and also able to fulfil specific tasks, when they are required to do so (E).

The Panel also notes that the study programmes follow all the national education regulations required for approval by the Estonian authorities (SER, M).

However, the PHE Navy curriculum has no elective subjects at all (Appendix curriculum, SER, T), although apparently required according to the EMA Statutes of Curriculum (amounting to 3 ECTS). On the other hand, electives were not in demand by stakeholders (S, A, T). None-the-less, this apparent shortcoming has been recognised by the Academy and will be dealt with in the course of the curricula renewal, and the total volume of elective courses will be increased to 6 ECTS in the PHE curricula (SER).

There is a lack of direct evidence that study programmes support creativity and entrepreneurship, a situation which is perhaps not unexpected in a military environment (T, S, P, AR, SC). However, military officers are often required to find solutions in unpredictable, potentially life-threatening operating environments.

Academy staff acknowledge that more could be done to relate studies and practice to the development of leadership skills and transferable competencies (T). For example, graduates can issue orders and are good at the delegation of tasks but lack skills of 'leading by example' (T). One possible way to teach leadership skills being considered by the EMA is combining the teaching of Master's and the PHE students (T).

The Panel found that additions to the curricula could be made so they include more leadership studies and subjects that will improve officers' transferable competencies. These could replace those subjects, which are found irrelevant or weakly linked with future services (S, A). For example, Navy alumni have found no real use of the infantry platoon and company studies, which could be replaced by more specific and Navy related defence (A). In addition, alumni note the need for more practical navigation, which would develop students as future Navy leaders (A).

Some subjects are more detailed than seems necessary and appear to have only a 'civilian' (rather than military) application. Examples of the latter are to be found in Navy and Air Force Technology Modules (for example, Technologies of Metals, Materials I and II, subjects related with cargo ships, Aerodynamics) (Appendix to the SER).

The PHE programs are divided into modules based on the professional functions of the officer and do not include the development of cross-curricula general competences (Appendix to the SER). However, as the curricula successfully combine theory and practice, there seems to be satisfaction with outcomes, despite the lack of the general competences in the studies (SER, T, S, P, E).

The curricula development process at the Academy is clear and appropriate and based on the EMA Statues of Curriculum (SER). Although the guidance regulations from the EDF are a few years old (the oldest dates from 2015), they give the basis for the curricula. Based on the interviews we conducted, the curricula development process seems to work as described in the SER (P). It includes the needs of the stakeholders, the results of the evaluation process and future demands (SER, T, S, E).

Curricula are constantly monitored and updated at least annually based on the feedback, requests etc. (SER, M, P). There is systematic and close cooperation with the Land Forces units, Air Force and Navy to discuss the expectations and possible changes of curricula (SER, E, T).

The workload for the students did not appear to be an issue, with enough time for the learning process (S). However, the main reason for failing to defend the thesis was often given to the Panel as being time related (SER, S, T), in particular to the time management by students and a lack of continuous Academy supervision. There was consensus that the main responsibility for successful completion of the thesis resides with the student, which is in accord with the EMA overall approach of students' self-responsibility (T). None-the-less, it was acknowledged that this process could be improved and a more 'hands on' approach by supervisors or mentors probably would help to increase the number of completions (T).

Employers were generally very satisfied with the graduates, because of their practical competencies and readiness to fulfil the position instantly after the completion of studies and training (E). Therefore, we can relate with confidence that the content and organisation of practical training support the achievement of learning outcomes of the study programme and meet the needs of employers.

Further, we note that there is a major overhaul in all the EMA higher education curricula in a process which is expected to be completed by the end of 2020 and to be implemented in 2021/2022 (SER, P). It is based on Academy drafted functional descriptions for officers and there are planned improvements in favour of improving students' leadership skills, digital competencies, transferable competencies, Russian language proficiency etc. (SER, M, P).

To even better meet the future needs of EDF and to foster academic education, the Academy intends to draft Master's degree curricula for the Navy and Air Force (SER, M, P, T). Those are steps to an even better military education and serve the needs of the EDF and are supported by the Panel.

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, the Panel concludes that the EMA conforms to the requirements of this Standard. The study programmes are designed and developed for the needs of the EDF. They meet the higher education and professional standards, with only minor shortcoming of 3 ECTS electives in Navy PHE curriculum, which will be dealt with as reported.

The objectives of study programmes, modules and courses and their planned learning outcomes are centred on the core areas of military officers' competence and further improvements are already in process with a planned overhaul of curricula. However, the study programmes could support more creativity, entrepreneurship and development of other general competencies.

Strengths

- The study programmes meet the needs of the EDF (and thus also Estonian society) well.
- EMA staff, the students and the most important stakeholders are comprehensively involved in the development process of the curricula.
- There is an overarching and extensive system of curricula development in place, which is also fully utilized.

Area of concern and recommendations

- There is a lack of direct evidence that study programmes support creativity and entrepreneurship, as is claimed by the Academy. We recommend that the EMA more extensively develops students' creativity and entrepreneurship and develops transferable and also other general competencies in the study programmes.
- Further, we recommend that more of students' study should relate directly to the development of leadership skills in the PHE curricula.

Opportunities for further improvement

- Focus more on the underlying academic content of courses and students' participation in R&D projects.
- Greater emphasis throughout the study programmes on the acquisition of foreign languages (especially English as the NATO main working language) for professional use, to meet the operational needs of allied forces and to ensure the expected level of interoperability.
- Improve the cooperation with the EAVA and TalTech EMarA to better meet the students' expectations on study programmes.
- E-learning could be made an integral part of the programmes to further improve students' familiarity and ease of use of blended learning and teachers' ability to employ these forms of teaching.

3.8 Learning and teaching

Standard:

Admissions requirements and procedures ensure fair access to higher education and the formation of a motivated student body. The higher education institution systemically implements a student-centred approach that guides students to take responsibility for their studies and career planning, and supports creativity and

innovation. Graduates of the higher education institution, with their professional knowledge and social skills, are competitive both nationally and internationally.

Guidelines:

The teaching process takes into account students' individual abilities and needs, and supports their development. Organisation of independent work and classroom teaching motivates students to take responsibility for their studies.

Teaching methods and learning aids used in the teaching process are modern, appropriate and effective, and support development of a digital culture.

Students are motivated to learn and contribute to improving the quality of their studies by providing meaningful feedback on both the learning process and the organisation of studies.

Evidence and analysis

Admissions requirements and procedures of the EMA follow guidance from the Estonian Military Service Act, based on which conscript service is an obligatory precondition to be admitted to both higher and vocational programs (SER). The EMA admission requirements and procedures are both described in the Academy's 'Degree Studies Admissions & Exclusion Conditions and Procedure', approved by the EMA Commandant, and in the EMA Admission Criteria, approved by the EMA Governing Council. Based on these documents the Academy prepares the annual rules for admission for each study programme and establishes Admission Boards (SER). There is also an APEL scheme for admission through those routes (SER).

For the purposes of creating a motivated student body at the EMA, close cooperation is practiced with the EDF to promote the military profession (M, T). Also, orientation courses are conducted to prospective applicants. In addition to harmonising the knowledge and skills acquired in conscript service, the orientation course is primarily intended to enable students to make an informed decision after gaining a thorough overview of studies at the EMA and their future profession (SER). In the view of the Panel, these admission procedures, with its legal limitations, ensure fair access to higher education and the formation of a motivated student body (S, T).

Members of the Panel were (during interviews) presented with several examples of how the EMA systemically implements a student-centred approach that guides students to take responsibility for their studies and career planning, and supports creativity and innovation (T, P).

The Academy revised its study and schedule planning approach in 2018 to better support the development of self-guided learning practices among its students (SER). Whereas previously studies were planned for the entire day, contact learning is now scheduled to take place during the first half of the day (excluding field exercises), and the student is given freedom to organise the second half of the day and conduct independent work.

In 2019 EMA also removed positions of course commanders from its structure to increase students' own responsibility for their actions and performance (M). These measures can be seen as reasonable and sufficient, bearing in mind the military organisational culture of the Academy.

Self-guided learning is also supported through a 'student to student' mentoring system, where students have the option to seek guidance and extra help from other (more experienced) students (SER, SC). Even though the system is still in the development phase, the Panel concluded from the interviews with students that overall satisfaction with the principles of the project is strong, despite some 'teething problems' (SER, S).

It appears that students are an increasingly heterogeneous group and that the growing importance of specifying detailed learning objectives and outcomes requires student-centred learning and teaching (S, T). This issue has been embraced by the Academy and manifests itself in different contexts (T, S, SC). In contrast, some students feel that the groups are in part too large for individual study (S). However, teachers at the Academy recognize the situation and strive to develop appropriate teaching methods (SER, S, T, P).

In the EMA academic staff 'brainstorming' is often a source of new approaches to teaching (T). There is a pedagogy course, which also contributes to understanding how to implement research and new approaches to the syllabus (T). The Academy's use of dialogue and discussion, seminars, peer-to-peer studies etc, appear to make learning as effective as possible (S, T).

The EMA utilises a wide variety of modern digital tools and solutions, e.g., Padlet, ArcGIS, KOLT (the EDF's situational awareness programme), Kahoot, Slido and JCATS (R, SER). The EDF also has an e-learning environment ILIAS which is step-by-step being replaced by the even more modern SharePoint solution (SER). In the meantime, the students of the EMA have indicated in the feedback questionnaire that instructors do not always have good digital competences, which might be considered as an area for improvement (S).

Even though the SER (p. 50) states that 'creativity is a key word in the objective of the higher education programme and in several learning outcomes (i.e. creativity in the application of military knowledge and research; methodology of creativity and creativity in problem-solving)' the key word 'creativity' cannot be found in either MA or in PHE curriculums or even in the study program of 'Leadership in Modern Organisations and Society' (Appendix to the SER) where one might reasonably expect to find it.

During the interviews, the Panel was assured by the beneficiaries of the EMA, including by stakeholders, that graduates of the EMA, with their professional knowledge and social skills, are competitive both nationally and internationally (E). Examples of several international joint exercises were given where students and graduates of the Academy were participating (E).

Since 2016 several major changes have been made to the EMA curricula based on employers (EDF), teachers or alumni feedback (SER). As it appears from the SER (p. 74) students have not yet directly submitted any amendments to EMA curricula but Academy teaching staff have annually made several minor amendments on the basis of student feedback received on individual subject courses.

Based on the results of the EMA 2020 satisfaction survey, 84% of respondent EMA students indicated that their studies are challenging and meet their expectations. According to the same survey, the Academy's reputation amongst the alumni has remained at 3.5 on the 5-point scale both in 2016 and 2020, whereas the employer's opinion of the EMA has increased from 3.5 to 3.9 (SER, p. 54).

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, the Panel concludes that the EMA conforms to requirements of the Standard. However, members of the Panel encourage the management of the EMA to continue developing their staff e-teaching competences to better conform with future learners' needs as well as to be more explicit in its efforts to support students' creativity and innovation. One possible way of formalising this approach would be to design separate creativity/innovation related learning outcomes into curriculum.

Strengths

None noted.

Areas of concern and recommendations

None noted.

Opportunities for further improvement

- The Standard states that "*the higher education institution systemically implements a student-centred approach that [--] supports creativity*." Even though the EMA in its SER reports that "Creativity is a key word in the objective of the higher education programme" (p. 50), one does not find it explicitly referred to in the curricula or programmes. Therefore, the Panel would encourage the EMA management to be more explicit in its efforts to support students' creativity and innovation. One possible way of formalising this approach would be to design separate creativity/innovation related learning outcomes into curricula.
- Continuous development of the Academy teaching staff e-teaching competences would allow better adjustment in situations like the recent Covid-19 'lockdown' and might also open new opportunities for raising blended learning teaching quality more generally.

3.9 Student assessment

Standard:

Assessments of students, including recognition of their prior learning and work experiences, support the process of learning and are consistent with expected learning outcomes. The objectivity and reliability of student assessments are ensured.

Guidelines:

The assessment criteria are understandable to students and students are informed about them in a timely manner. Members of the teaching staff cooperate in defining assessment criteria and apply similar approaches.

Assessment methods are versatile and relevant, and assess the degree of achievement of learning outcomes (including general competencies).

If possible, more than one staff member is involved in the development of assessment tasks and student assessments. Along with assessments, students receive feedback that supports their individual development.

The HEI supports development of the teaching staff's assessment competencies.

When recognising prior learning and work experience towards the completion of the study programme, results obtained through the studies and work experiences (the achieved learning outcomes) are assessed.

Students are aware of their rights and obligations, including the procedures for challenges regarding assessments.

Evidence and analysis

The EMA has a set of APEL regulations and an associated process by which potential students of the Academy may apply for recognition of prior accredited (formally assessed) learning and experiential (e.g., work-based) equivalents (SER, SC). Currently (2020) APEL claims are made in paper-based format to an 'APEL Committee' of the EMA (made up of the Head of Department of Academic Studies, members of Academy staff and two student representatives, SER, SC). However, there are plans to digitalise and hence streamline the process through using the new SIS (SER).

In terms of the number of ECTS credit points applied for through APEL there appears to be significant variability from year to year (Table 32, SER, p. 59). The 'success rate' (credit points claimed as a proportion of points applied for) also varies ranging from 77% to 100% (in the case of vocational education applications, based on Table 32, SER, p.59). The lowest success rates appear to be for 'higher education students' (ibid).

Student assessment occurs in both formative and summative ways at the EMA (SER, T, P). In terms of formative assessment, this occurs in the main through teacher feedback during the course (SER, T, S) and overall students appeared content with the volume and nature of this feedback (T, S) although satisfaction rates between 2016/17 and 2018/19 showed a slight decline (SER, Table 31, p. 58) before rising again more latterly (ibid).

Student assessment is governed by the EMA Study Regulations, and the Academy also takes guidance from relevant government regulations (SER).

Course syllabi are prepared by the teaching staff responsible for the subject in question and approved by the Chair of the relevant academic department (P, T). All EMA syllabi are made available to the students via the Student Information System (SIS) (SER, P).

The course syllabi appear to be the main way that the EMA describes and communicates the assessment methods to be used, the assessment criteria and (where appropriate) the grading scale utilised (SER, SC).

The coherence and uniformity of assessment of students appears to be assured largely through the professional expertise of the teaching staff of the EMA (SER, T). The staff have a large degree of autonomy in deciding on the assessment methods and the criteria to be used (although these should align with the learning outcomes, SER, p. 57). It is unclear how assessment decision-making at the

level of modules or courses is coordinated across programmes to ensure a good balance of assessment methods and timing (no discussion in SER; T, P).

The Academy also acknowledges (in its SER) that they need to raise awareness amongst the staff of the EDF speciality schools (who contribute, for example, to the EMA's NCO programme) on the 'regulations and requirements related to the organisation of studies as well as on the subject of [...] assessment methods for the purposes of harmonising the level and quality of instruction' (SER, p. 100).

Therefore, the Panel concludes that it is questionable whether the part of the Standard that relates to '[t]he objectivity and reliability of student assessments are ensured' is fully met.

Academy students are entitled to attempt a final examination up to three times per each subject course (SER, T, S). Between 2015 and 2018 the average number of students taking a second retake examination was approximately 45 (based on Table 30, SER, p. 58). This would not appear unduly large given the size of the student population during that period.

Students at the EMA have the right to appeal against an assessment decision (SER, S, A, T, SC), utilising up to three institutional levels of the Academy (the Chair of the academic department concerned, the Head of Department of Academic Studies, and finally a central EMA Appeals Committee; SER, P). Only seven such cases have been heard by the 'ultimate arbiter', the Appeals Committee in five years (SER, p. 58). The Academy suggests that this provides evidence of awareness amongst students of their right to appeal. There was also some evidence that the right to appeal was not always successfully communicated by teaching staff to students (S).

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, the Panel concludes that the EMA partially conforms to requirements of the Standard. There does not appear to be an overarching system that ensures students have a good balance of assessment methods and that the burden on students is spread as evenly as possible throughout the academic year. The Panel does however acknowledge that Academy in-house training on 'Planning of Assessment to Support Learning' only commenced in 2019 (SER, Table 29, row 3, p. 57) and it is perhaps too early to assess its impact.

Strengths

None noted.

Areas of concern and recommendations

- There is a lack of an overarching monitoring of the balance and form of assessment of students at the programme level (for example, in terms of ensuring a variety of assessment methods so that students are able to demonstrate their full potential; avoiding assessment deadlines occurring close to each other). In addition to continuing with the training of academic staff that began in 2019, the Academy should also consider introducing a programme-level mechanism (e.g., a meeting of programme teaching teams before teaching commences) to enable this.
- There is scope for greater collaboration with the EDF on a more consistent approach to assessment - for example, common marking criteria. The Academy should find appropriate ways to ensure that the marking of students' assessed work is more consistent among both the staff of the EMA as well as visiting staff.

Opportunities for further improvement

- The Academy could consider developing an online system to enable the APEL process to be streamlined.
- Look at ways to better communicate to staff and students the right to appeal. For example, consider including this as a general formula of words in assignment briefs.

3.10 Learning support systems

Standard:
The higher education institution ensures that all students have access to academic, career and psychological counselling. Students' individual development and academic progress are monitored and supported.

Guidelines:
The HEI assists the student in developing an individual study programme based on the student's special needs as well as educational abilities and preferences.
The HEI advises its students (including students with special needs and international students) on finding practical training places as well as jobs. Students are aware of where to get support in the case of psychological problems.
The HEI has a functioning system to support and advise international students (including psychological and career counselling) which, inter alia, helps them integrate smoothly into the membership of the HEI and Estonian society. The HEI analyses the reasons students withdraw from studies or drop out, and takes steps to increase the effectiveness of the studies.

The HEI supports student participation in extra-curricular activities and civil society initiatives.
The HEI monitors student satisfaction with the counselling services provided and makes changes as needed.

Evidence and analysis

The teaching and the learning environment (as well as the general atmosphere of the EMA) fully supports Academy students in their studies (S). Indeed, in recent years, student satisfaction with the learning environment has increased to 3.41 on a 4-point scale (SER). Further, the Panel found that students feel that the feedback they give genuinely influences the teaching at the EMA and they usually get the support that they need (S).

Since the students are also active service members of the EDF, it appears relatively easy for them to adapt to the EMA culture (S). Also, it means that the EDF personnel support system is also available for the students, in addition to that of the Academy (SER). The students have an orientation period which includes the EMA student guide. (SER, S, T, SC).

The Panel found that the Academy is fully committed to serving and counselling its students (S, T). The EMA provides the students with accommodation, catering, health care, personal equipment (e.g., combat equipment), IT-support, transport, library and teaching aids (SER, R). Further, the students seemed to be aware of and satisfied with the services (SER, T, S, SC).

The EMA has three departments, a 'Student Corps' and other staff members who offer academic counselling (SER, SC). The counselling includes day-to-day service duty questions as well as psychological and religious topics.

In addition, a mentoring initiative has been started, but is still under development as the structural reform (and the Covid-19 pandemic) has had an impact on a number of the usual processes at the Academy (SER, SC). Through the mentoring system it is possible, in principle, to offer guidance to other students who may require support, particularly in the early stages of study. The students find the mentoring system a good idea and useful but note that the implementation is 'patchy' and there appears to be insufficient time for the mentors (SER, T, S).

The EDF supports the EMA with psychological, social and religious issues. For example, the EDF provides a 24-hour helpline for psychological counselling (SER, T, S, SC).

Participation in extracurricular activities is supported by the Academy and in collaboration with the Student Corps (SER, SC). Students have access to an open gym area where there is an option for both individual training and group training. The Academy also has partner services with 'Aura Waterpark' and 'MyFitness' sports clubs. The Students Corps organise additional events for the student population of the Academy, which is directly connected with students' own input. The EMA also offers an option to acquire both B and C category driving licenses (SC).

The EMA library is successfully providing the students with the core texts required for study, e.g., in military science (R). The Academy also provides technical support to support student learning in respect of equipment, database information and IT (R).

The library also provides students with access to various daily newspapers, learning databases (e.g., EBSCO, CARL (Combined ArmsResearch Library) Digital Library, Questia and Military Periscope) and professional and academic e-journals (SER, T, S, SC,R). There are a total of four military journals in the Estonian language available from the Academy library, one of which is the EMA's own journal (Information provided by the EMA after request). There are 24 foreign language journals available (including in Russian, English and German) (ibid). However, as was acknowledged during the Panel visit, the EMA could improve access to other (non-military but complementary) e- journals (AR, R).

The Planning Section of the EMA Department of Academic Studies is regularly monitoring academic progress (SC).

In regards to statistics for students 'dropping out', as understood from the SER and the feedback from interviews, that the rate at the Academy is significantly lower than Estonian PHE average for the period 2016 - 2019 (SER, P, SC). However, despite these lower-than average rates, the EMA has still analyzed the reasons for students discontinuing studies (SER, SC) and is to be praised for doing so. In the main these are personal reasons, non-compliance with the requirements for active military service (mainly inadequate physical fitness level) and poor academic progress (SER). For improving the physical fitness level there have been changes made (for example, to the daily schedule) to allow time for training.

Non-progression to the final stages was quite high between years 2016 and 2019 mostly due to non-submission of the final thesis. However, the Academy has made good progress in identifying the reasons for this and to support the students (SER, T, S, SC).

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, the Panel concludes that the EMA conforms to the requirements of this Standard. All students have access to academic, career and psychological counselling. Students' individual development and academic progress are monitored and supported.

Strengths

- The EMA has the active support of the EDF regarding support systems for students.
- The Academy is highly committed to serving and counselling the students.
- The Library is, taking into account the size of the EMA, well-stocked in the military sciences.

Areas of concern and recommendations

None noted.

Opportunity for further improvement

- Consider increasing access for students and staff to non-military electronic journals, e.g., those in engineering, natural and social sciences.

3.11 Research, development and/or other creative activity

Standard:

The higher education institution has defined its objectives and focus in the fields of RDC based on its mission, as well as on the expectations and future needs of society, and assesses their implementation and the societal impact of its RDC activities. RDC supports the process of teaching and learning at the higher education institution. Support services for RDC are purposeful and support implementation of the objectives of the core process.

Guidelines:

The HEI places a high value on the role and responsibilities of the field of RDC in society and evaluates the results of its RDC activities, their international visibility and societal impact.

The HEI responds flexibly to the current needs of society and the labour market in terms of its research and plans its research in collaboration with enterprises, public sector institutions and organisations of the third sector.

Members of teaching staff introduce students to their research results as well as the latest scientific achievements in their areas of specialisation, and involve students in their R&D projects where possible.

The organisation and management of RDC take into account thematic differences and the mission (profile) of the HEI.

Evidence and analysis

The SER argues that the Academy has had an increased focus on R&D in the last seven years, which has had to improvements in general terms for the research culture of the Academy and specifically for the volume of applied research undertaken (SER, p. 65). The Panel can confidently confirm this to be the case (M, T, AR). The successful launching of the EDF doctoral studies programme for active service members in 2015, and its continuation until at least 2020 exemplifies this increased focus (SER, p. 66) (see below).

Since 2015 there has certainly been a significant increase in both the R&D responsibilities and the degree to which the Academy undertakes these activities (SER, E, M, T, AR). In terms of the former, the EMA now serves, for example, as the national centre for military science (SER, M, AR). An example of the latter is the significant growth in externally funded R&D projects (SER, AR). For example, as of 2020 the Academy had secured funding for three externally funded projects with a total of 371,000 euros (SER, p. 65). There are currently (December 2020) 28 EMA R&D projects listed on the *Estonian Research Information System* website (https:// https://www.etis.ee/).

The number of EMA academic members of staff submitting peer-reviewed articles for 'international research journals' has increased from an average of about 25 per year to the current average of 60 (SER, p. 67). Further, the number of publications per member of staff has also increased (ibid).

The steering documents of EMA's research and their hierarchy are clearly pinpointed in the self-evaluation report (SER, p. 64). The defence-related activities of the EMA are informed by the Estonian Ministry of Defence's R&D policy, currently covering the period 2014-2022 (SER, E, AR). Within the Academy itself, R&D activities are coordinated by its Department of Applied Research (SER, AR).

The EMA has also established multidisciplinary research groups that collaborate with Estonian universities and other research institutions (SER, AR).

The Academy has defined its R&D objectives, in consultation with stakeholders (SER, E, AR) and these focus primarily on the development of the EDF's military capabilities (SER, AR). Specifically, the EMA undertakes R&D into leadership, operations analysis, resource management and military technology (SER, AR).

The EMA has responded to the greater clarity present at the national level through taking the initiative for initiating R&D projects and coordinating with other units of the EDF (SER). This involves identifying priority research areas with the EDF, drawing up project descriptions (including budget and timetable), implementation, monitoring and reporting (SER, AR).

In terms of national defence priority areas, funding comes from the Estonian national defence budget (SER, AR). Further funding has been secured from external sources such as the European Union (to date three externally funded projects totalling c. 370,000 Euro; SER, AR). This is a major achievement.

International cooperation in R&D appears to have increased significantly in the last few years (SER, AR). A notable example is the increased collaboration with the NATO Science and Technology Organisation (NATO STO) (SER). The Academy is represented on all of the STO's panels and many of its working groups and has hosted several meetings (SER).

The EMA also partners with commercial defence industry companies for the purposes of R&D, including robotic vehicle manufacturers (SER, AR).

EMA staff also lend their professional expertise in support of Estonia's defence capability although, for obvious reasons, publication of the outcomes is not normally undertaken (SER).

Since 2015 the EMA has launched and successfully implemented a programme whereby active service members (e.g., from the EDF) are supported to undertake doctoral studies with a number of Estonian universities and research institutions such as the University of Tartu, TalTech, and the Estonian University of Life Sciences with a long-term view to enhancing the EDF's capability development through science-based research (SER, AR). The doctoral students are then 'seconded' to the EMA Department of Applied Research and undertake projects agreed with the EDF (or other public bodies) (AR). There are currently eight doctoral students with one at completion stage (AR). The Panel views this as a significant achievement by the Academy.

The EMA actively promotes publication of the R&D outcomes of its staff (AR). The Academy also has its own peer-reviewed journal (the *Estonian Journal of Military Studies*). Many of the papers in the Journal are published in both Estonian and English, but not all (SER, AR and inspection of online journal editions).

There is evidence of some engagement of students with defence related R&D projects (SER) most particularly at the Masters' level (AR). However, whilst research undoubtedly informs teaching of PHEs in the Academy there was less evidence of engagement with students with these programmes (S, T, AR).

It is clear that the EMA's role is not only to execute the research asked for by the MoD and the EDF, but also to serve as a connecting node to other research organisations (SER p.64 & p. 65, AR). In this aspect it seems that the Academy serves an important task of connecting military R&D to other R&D carried out outside the Defence Forces. This also means that there is a good possibility of the societal impact of the research carried out to go beyond the Defence Forces and other institutions close to the Defence Forces (AR).

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, the Panel concludes that the EMA conforms to requirements of the Standard. It is clear from the interviews (AR) that there has been active work to improve both research itself and the research environment in the last seven years. It was also clear that research has taken place in direct dialogue with the EDF, contributing both to practical and theoretical results, particularly in areas closely connected to the development of new capabilities. It was also evident that the management of the EMA (particularly the Department of Applied Research) has a strategic view with an aim to improve the impact of research undertaken at the Academy has within the wider science community through efforts to publish research in journals with higher academic ranking. In addition, the interviews showed that research affects the development of the EMA programme curricula as well as, in some cases, students' choice of thesis subjects (AR, T, S).

Strengths

- There is widespread engagement with research throughout the Academy, including both military and civilian staff. The EMA encourages this in a number of proactive ways, including research 'boot camps' and through providing funding for international conferences.
- The EMA has very clear research objectives, established in collaboration with stakeholders and an efficient and effective system for enacting research projects.
- The Academy has developed significant expertise in attracting external funding to support its research and development activities.

Areas of concern and recommendations

None noted.

Opportunity for further improvement

- Continue to develop the 'local' research and knowledge transfer environment within the EMA in order to further increase productivity and to help establish the Academy within the international research community.

3.12 Service to society

Standard:

The higher education institution initiates and implements development activities, which enhance prosperity in the community and disseminate recent know-how in the areas of the institution's competence. The higher education institution, as a learning-oriented organisation, promotes lifelong learning in society and creates high-quality opportunities for that.

Guidelines:

The HEI contributes to the development of the community's well-being by sharing its resources (library, museums, sports facilities, etc.), by providing consulting and advisory services, and by organising concerts, exhibitions, shows, conferences, fairs and other events.

The HEI involves alumni in activities aimed at the development of the HEI and the knowledge society.

Employees of the HEI participate in the work of professional associations and in other community councils and decision-making bodies as experts, directing society's development processes as opinion leaders. The impact academic employees have on society is taken into account when evaluating their work.

The HEI has defined the objectives for in-service training and measures their implementation. In-service training is planned in accordance with the needs of target groups.

Evidence and analysis

Although 'Service to Society' is viewed by the EMA as subsidiary to its core functions (SER, p. 33) the Academy none-the-less acknowledges the importance of raising awareness about the importance of national defence and increasing public trust in Estonia's military leadership (SER, p. 68, P).

Practical services to society include the offering of training in war and disaster medicine to the Estonian and international medical community; the sharing of the EMA's facilities, both physical (including access to its library and museum and the loaning of space) and intellectual (in terms of professional expertise, attendance at conferences) (SER, M, E, A, P, SC).

Foreign language courses (primarily English, French and Russian) offered by the Academy are undertaken by about 140 participants per year from the Estonian military (based on data on p. 69 of the SER), and these are also offered to the military from some other countries. The EMA also administers NATO's military English exams on behalf of Estonia (SER).

The EMA offers a good range of in-service training opportunities: these include courses for particular military roles and ranks; 'refresher' courses in communication, tactical decision making and courses that focus on didactic skills (P, SC). The number of active service members of the EDF undertaking in-service training courses with the EMA in each year was 2016 (318), 2017 (391), 2018 (493), 2019 (441) (based on Table 36, p. 70, SER) (excluding 2020 which will have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic). Hence there has been an increase of about 40% in the last four years. In the view of the Panel this is a notable achievement.

The EMA shares its computer-based simulation systems with the EDF, NATO (for international exercises), schools and the police service (SER, SC).

The EMA's Education Resources Group plays an active role in producing written materials, videos and e-learning resources for the EDF, MoD and national defence agencies. The Education Resources Group also publishes books of interest to both the academic community and the wider public (such as books on Estonian military history) (SER, P, SC).

Alumni are involved in the life of the Academy in various ways: in the EMA's curriculum development (SER, P), through completion of a 'satisfaction survey' (in 2016 and 2020, SER, p.34, A), as participant's in 'alumni shadowing (where the teaching staff shadow alumni in their EDF work, SER, A, SC). and (less formally) as the EMA's 'calling card' (SER, p. 32, A) for communication with the EDF and other stakeholders. However, alumni appeared to us to be willing to participate more in the development of the Academy (beyond a survey every four years) and some felt that the EMA could be more proactive in this (A).

Conclusions

Based on the analysis, the Panel concludes that the EMA conforms to requirements of the standard. Indeed, 'Service to Society' is a particular strength of the Academy. For example, the training provided by the War and Disaster Medicine Centre complements the overall medical system of Estonia (SER, R,

P). Furthermore, the Academy made a significant contribution during the initial stages of the Covid-19 pandemic 'first wave' to the Estonian Health Board's crisis centre and was involved in setting up a field hospital in Saaremaa island (which was hit hardest by the coronavirus) in April 2020 (media coverage).

Strengths

- The EMA plays a very active role in 'Services to Society' offering a very valuable service to cognate professions and more widely within Estonian society. The EMA's contribution to medical training is particularly impressive.
- The increasing uptake of EMA in-service training courses by EDF personnel, which suggests the Academy is meeting an important need.

Areas of concern and recommendations

None noted.

Opportunity for further improvement

- Engagement with alumni needs further development, particularly in terms of more frequent and focussed communication.

4. Assessment findings of the study programmes in higher education

The EMA offers a total of four higher education curricula, all falling under one study programme group (that of 'National Defence'), and one vocational education curriculum under the 'Military Studies' curriculum group (assessed in part 3 of this Report).

Three of the higher education programmes are at Level 6, Professional Higher Education (PHE) and offer education and training in military leadership for the three armed forces: the Land Force, the Air Force and the Navy.

The Academy offers a single Level 7 Masters' programme for the Land Force.

Study programme group	Study programme	Level
National Defence	Military leadership for the air force	Professional Higher Education
	Military leadership for the navy	Professional Higher Education
	Military leadership for the land force	Professional Higher Education
	Military leadership for the land force	Master's studies

General information

As of 2019/2020, there were 40 students studying on the Level 7 EMA Master's programme 'Military Leadership for the Land Force', 103 on the Level 6 Professional Higher Education (PHE) programme 'Military Leadership for the Land Force', 15 on the Level 6 PHE programme 'Military Leadership for the Air Force' and 11 on the Level 6 PHE programme 'Military Leadership for the Navy' (SER).

All together 169 students were undertaking the Academy MA and PHE programmes in 2019/2020 with the number is decreasing in recent years by about 4% to 5% per year (totals were 177 in 2018/2019 and 182 in 2017/2018) (based on data in Table 3, SER, p.12).

The curricula are regularly and systematically updated through EMA Board decisions, usually once per year (SER, P). The analysed curricula 'Military Leadership for the Air Force' and 'Military Leadership for the Navy' were adopted respectively in 2013 and 2011 (SER). Current versions were approved by the EMA Council in May 2020 (SER). The analysed PHE curriculum 'Military Leadership for the Land Force' was adopted in 2004 and with the current version approved by the EMA Council in May 2020 (ibid). The Master's curriculum was adopted in 2004 with the current version approved by the EMA Council in May 2020 (ibid).

In the recent years all of the PHE curricula of the Academy have been subject to several changes and amendments, based on the needs analysis research conducted by the Academy (SER, E, P). The project 'The EDF Leadership Development Programme 2018-2022' has produced a military leadership competencies model that was used for the development of leadership subjects for the Master's degree programme to support the development of six competencies – conceptual and professional competencies, as well as competences related to leadership, organisation, communication and self-reflection (SER, P, AR). The competences were used as an input to redesign of the curriculum to better fit the needs of employers (SER).

Feedback from the previous 2017 EKKA assessment has been addressed in the PHE curricula especially with the view to improved cooperation with partner organisations delivering specific modules for the EMA, such as the Estonian Aviation Academy and TalTech Estonia Maritime Academy (SER, M). The aspect of supporting students creativity and innovation, also commented in the previous reports, still remains vaguely represented in the curricula and programs, but was content-wise brought out as a central item in several interviews with the Panel (T, AR).

There is a continuous process going on for the renewal of the higher education curricula, based on EMA drafted description of functional competencies of junior officers (SER, P). It is expected to be completed by the end of 2020 (SER). During the interviews with EMA management and beneficiaries, the Panel were assured that extending the Master's curriculum to include Air Force and Navy curricula is to be finalised in the next few years (M, E).

All of these improvements have been done systematically and in close cooperation with stakeholders to meet the current and future needs of the EDF (M, E). The Academy also has generally enough personnel to successfully launch the revised PHE curricula (SER, M). However, the desirability of increasing the number of Navy and Air Force lecturers should be considered in order to successfully launch the new Master's curriculum.

4.1 Planning and management of studies

- The design and development of study programme(s) take into account the expectations of students and other stakeholders, national strategies, legislation and trends in the particular area as well as labour market needs. The level and volume of RDC activities is sufficient and supports the launching of the study programme(s) in higher education.
- The objectives of study programme(s), modules (including courses) and their learning outcomes are concrete and coherent. The teaching content and methods and assessment criteria and methods support students in achieving their learning outcomes and developing their key competencies. The study programmes support the development of creativity and entrepreneurship and other general competencies.
- The administration of material and financial resources that ensure the design and implementation of the study programme(s) is purposeful, systematic and sustainable. The learning environment, including materials, tools and technology support the students in achieving their learning outcomes.

Evidence and analysis

The EMA's Professional Higher Education (PHE) curricula are tightly connected with the employers', that is the EDF's, needs and expectations (M, E). Further, the design and development of study programmes also take into account the expectations of students and other stakeholders, national strategies, legislation and trends in the particular area as well as labour market needs (SER, M, E). Employers' representatives, of all service branches and weapon types, are actively involved in the development of the Academy's PHE curricula (E).

The recent 2019/2020 'overhaul' of the Academy's PHE curricula was based both on the EMA's internal developments as well as the EDF Human Resource Survey results (SER).

Compared to the previous institutional accreditation of 2013, the EMA has initiated significant development in expanding its R&D capabilities (SER, AR). Various peer-reviewed publications published by the EMA were presented to the Panel and are used as learning materials in the Academy (AR). The level and volume of R&D activities is now good and supports the development of the HE study programme(s) in the EMA.

All Academy PHE study programmes are divided into 4–5 modules based on their content. The objectives of study programmes, modules (including courses) and their learning outcomes are concrete and coherent (SER).

The teaching content and methods and assessment criteria and methods support students in achieving their learning outcomes and developing their key competencies (SER, T, S, A). However, even after the interviews with students and teaching staff, the understanding of how the study programmes support the development of creativity and entrepreneurship and other general competencies remains vague (S, T).

Students and alumni from the Navy and Air Force reported that they are/were taught an extensive amount of infantry subjects and they are very well educated on those, but vice versa Land Force students are not at all aware of Navy and Air Force specifics, because it is not included in their curriculum (A, S).

Due to the fact that for the duration of the practical placement EMA students are transferred to another EDF unit, the assignments to practical placement are determined by the directive of the Commander of the EDF (SER). This is also related to one of the main challenges with practical placements, i.e. if the directive is delayed, it will inevitably also delay the preparation of supervisors, which will, in turn, affect their understanding of their role as supervisors and the overall quality of the practical placement. This emerged during interviews with students as an issue to address in the future (S).

The EMA budget has gradually increased since 2017, and it is fixed in the NDAP for 2021-2024 that this trend will continue (SER). The latter also confirms that the administration of material and financial resources that ensure the design and implementation of the study programmes is purposeful, systematic and sustainable.

During the interviews as well as in the preliminary questionnaire some criticism was provoked by the historical premises of the EMA in Tartu (S, T). However, construction of new premises of the Academy should be completed by 2023 with a modern learning environment (M, SER). Therefore, the learning environment, including materials, tools and technology generally support the students in achieving their learning outcomes now (as confirmed with the Academy respective survey results, SER) and probably even more so in a few years.

According to the 2020 satisfaction survey, the students in the Land Force and Air Force programmes are most satisfied with the EMA learning environment (average grade 3.56 and 3.68, respectively), while students in the Navy (3.46) and Master's studies (2.98) programmes are the least satisfied (SER).

Strength

- Good and close cooperation with the main beneficiary – the EDF – at all management levels and in all study programmes.

Area of concern and recommendations

- The curricula support to the development of students' creativity, entrepreneurship and other general competencies is vague. The percentage of aforementioned studies (or clearly linked other supporting subjects) should be improved and the means also understood unambiguously by all students, teaching staff and other stakeholders.

Opportunities for further improvement

- Enhance military leaders' key competency development by having more general leadership, 'followership' and teamwork lectures, seminars and most importantly (simulated) exercises with in-depth feedback on student performance and possibilities for improvement.
- Continue to develop competences of the supervisors in places of practical placement of the EMA students as well as brief more often the supervisors and students on each role and the expectations during the placement.

4.2 Learning, teaching and assessment

- Students' choice of specialisation is supported. Conditions and organisation of admission ensure fair access to education and motivated student body.
- A student-centred approach is used in the studies, aiming at the students to assume responsibility for planning their studies and career and supporting the development of key competencies and achieving the learning outcomes of the study programme.
- Student assessment, including taking accreditation of prior and experiential learning into account, supports the students and corresponds to the learning outcomes. Objective and reliable assessment is ensured.
- The organisation of studies including practical work and training is based on the specificities of students and forms of study and supports the student in achieving the learning outcomes. Opportunities have been established for mobility within Estonia and internationally.
- Support services for students are in place and available for students. Individual development and progress of students are monitored and supported.
- Graduates of the study programme are competitive in terms of their knowledge and social skills both nationally and internationally.

Evidence and analysis

The professional specialisation options are mostly dictated by the needs of the EDF's service branches, academic achievement, speciality completed in conscript service and then also on the student's personal preference (SER, E, T).

The EMA is continuously assessing and improving the admission tests every year (SER, SC). Despite this, there is room for improvement in terms of the number of applicants to the EMA's PHE programmes, especially Air Force and Navy curricula (based on data in SER, SC). This would likely raise the level of highly motivated students, because of the bigger selection pool. However, the most important factor in numbers of applications remains the overall popularity of the military profession (SER, SC).

Deriving from the strong connection between the Academy and the EDF, the organisation of studies including practical work and training for the PHEs is based on the specificities of students and forms of study and supports the student in achieving the learning outcomes (SER, M).

As it appeared from interviews with PHE students as well as with teaching staff, in principle a student-centred approach is used in the studies, encouraging students to assume responsibility for planning their studies and career as well as supporting the development of key competencies and achieving the learning outcomes of the study programme (S, T).

During the interviews with students and staff it appeared that the students do not have a choice with regards to putting together their own study programme (S, T). This is due to students being active service members. Flexibility, however, is offered through academic leave and use of the APEL procedure (SER).

Concerning the elective courses in the Navy curriculum there are no elective courses available (SER). However, while conducting the Panel interviews with students, most interviewees did not express the need for additional elective courses and were satisfied with the existing structure of their programmes (S).

Nearly half of the teaching staff for the Navy PHE programme come from the Naval School and TalTech EMarA; whereas in the Air Force PHE programme a little less than half of the curriculum is provided under the supervision of visiting teaching staff from the EAVA and Air Force units (SER). While conducting the interviews it was clear that the EMA understands the potential risks on teaching quality, arising from teaching staff being outsourced and are actively seeking out solutions (S, M).

Some opportunities (although limited due to specifics of the professions) have been established for staff and student mobility within Estonia and internationally (SER, S, T).

Even though the curriculum of the EMA is specific and oriented for national defence use, it was expressed by both employers and management staff of the EMA that the graduates of the PHE study programme are competitive in terms of their knowledge and social skills both nationally and internationally (E, M). The same was confirmed by interviews with students (S).

Access to the Academy Master's degree is limited to officers in the EDF who have completed the PHE programmes or the equivalent thereof (SER, SC). Suitably qualified students are usually highly motivated, and in addition they have taken a mental aptitude test for entry (SC).

That the graduates of the programmes are competitive nationally is a core demand by the EDF, and one way of assuring this is by comparing their skills in an international comparison through participation in international exercises and international courses (SER, p.92). The Panel interviews indicate that such participation is an important part of the education and training of students, and opportunities for international experience is much appreciated by the students themselves (S). Skills developed through international cooperation include foreign language acquisition and cultural understanding as well as more technical military matters (S).

With regard to support services, students on the PHE and Master's programmes have an extensive support system in place, from academic advisers to social workers (SER p. 91 and also chapter 3.10). During the interviews the students emphasised the availability and quality of support given by the teaching and other staff at the Academy (S).

With regards to student responsibility for deciding on professional studies and career planning, the main responsibility appears to reside with the EDF (SER, SC).

Much work has gone into varying the methods of assessment on the programmes but in the SER there is no discussion on how objective and reliable assessment is assured. In the interviews with students some argued that the civilian teaching staff were better at marking objectivity and providing feedback when assessing work (S). Assessment and more specifically re-take procedures in some subjects (including Air Power Theory and Air Operations, Fundamentals of NATO Air Defence System Command and Combat Principles) could be improved which would make it more clear for students and also would potentially improve assessment results.

There is a penalty of one grade level with each re-take and no re-takes possible on successful submissions at all in some subjects (for example Fundamentals of NATO Air Defence System Command and Combat Principles) (T, P).

Strength

- Student suggestions on improvements, both with regard to teaching methods and specific teachers, are taken seriously by the teaching staff who have made efforts to improve student activity in class. Students generally claimed that their input on possible improvements in teaching were acted on.

Areas of concern and recommendations

- There is a need to harmonize re-take procedures and penalties across courses and programmes. We recommend that the Academy considers this and takes the appropriate action through the designated channels.
- For improving the teaching quality, it might be considered if the development of feedback to students and ways to improve and assure objectivity in grading could be a focus area for skills development of the teaching staff. It is an area where staff transfer of skills to each other could be useful for the teaching community as a whole.

Opportunities for further improvement

- The EMA could identify more feasible opportunities for mobility for Academy staff and students within Estonia and internationally in cooperation with allies and partner nations.
- Consideration should be given and to allow students to improve their grade in courses where a pass mark has been achieved.

4.3 Development, cooperation and internationalisation of teaching staff

- Teaching is conducted by a sufficient number of professionally competent members of the teaching staff who support the development of the students.
- Teaching staff follows the principles of academic ethics and the codes of conduct in case of non-compliance.
- Members of the teaching staff participate in international mobility programs which encourage the development of their teaching and RDC activities and the cultural openness of the HEI and the Estonian society.
- The development of the teaching staff depends on the needs of the study programmes and students as well as on the feedback from all parties and self-evaluation. The effectiveness of studies and RDC activities, students' feedback, the effectiveness of supervision, development of teaching and supervision skills, international mobility and entrepreneurial or work experience in the specific field

outside the HEI is taken into consideration in evaluating the work of the member of the staff.

Evidence and analysis

Teaching on Academy PHE programs is conducted by a sufficient number of professionally competent members of the teaching staff who support the development of the students (SER, E, S, T). However, there are some ongoing discrepancies between EMA expectations and the content provided by the partnering institutions, such as the EAVA and TalTech EMarA, mainly because the latter do not have knowledge of military needs in their subjects (SER, A, S). At the interviews with the management and teaching staff of the EMA, it appeared that they are well aware of the challenge and are considering employment of their own teaching staff in the Navy and Air Force specific subjects (M, T). This would allow a greater ability to 'customise' the curricula for EMA student needs. Moreover, it would enhance the possibilities for having introductory Navy and Air Force subjects in the Land Force curriculum and will allow what is currently only a solitary Navy and Air Force specialist/lecturer to concentrate more on curriculum development and cooperation by lowering the amount of their teaching (currently 33 and 20 ECTS respectively).

Teaching staff of the EMA follow the Academy (and usual higher education) principles of academic ethics and the codes of conduct (in cases of non-compliance) (SER, T). At the same time it should be emphasized that during the interviews with teaching staff when ethics was concerned, the civilian teaching staff referred clearly to academic ethics when the military staff mainly referred to military ethics and values (T). Even though the existence of both these ethics systems is a mark of high integrity and good basis for value-based leadership, the content of academic ethics and military ethics do not entirely overlap (SER).

With regard to research the opportunities for development of the teaching staff are very good for those belonging to the Department of Applied Research, and good for those belonging to the Department of Academic Studies (SER, AR, SC). In addition it appears good practice in the Academy that those teachers who were not already involved in research have the possibility to learn more about the research process by joining one of the writing camps arranged (T, AR).

In terms of internationalisation, those Academy staff that are able to lecture in English are submitted to a list that is shared with the European Security and Defence College (SER, AR). We also note that mobility grants are available to teachers who are interested in giving guest lectures abroad (SER).

The EMA staff are able to undertake a course on 'Learning and teaching at University' given by University of Tartu (SER, T). Student evaluation of teachers contributes to the assessment of EMA staff undertaking the course.

However, introducing other development opportunities for teaching staff (including international mobility) would probably improve students' satisfaction with teaching at the EMA, which has stood generally on the same level from 2016 to 2019 (SER, Fig.35).

Strength

- The EMA has highly qualified and professional active military personnel/leaders available to support student learning, in part because of the mandatory rotation system with the EDF that is in place (three to five years).

Areas of concern and recommendations

None noted.

Opportunities for further improvement

- To investigate the possibility of increasing the number of opportunities for teaching staff to undertake short-term mobility and likewise invite more foreign lecturers, which would both benefit the internationalization goals of the Academy.
- Increase the systematic cooperation with allied nations Defence Academies.
- Consider guest or invited lecturers in-house or over the 'e-channels' instead of some EAVA and TalTech EMarA studies to better meet the needs of the Academy.
- Implement a system for more often (than annual) performance evaluation, development needs and formal feedback from teachers' immediate supervisors.

5. Assessment findings of the study programme in vocational education (VET)

The EMA offers a single Level 5 Vocational Education and Training (VET) programme in military leadership for senior 'Non-commissioned officers' (NCOs).

Curriculum group	Study programme	Types of VET (Level of EQF) Forms of study (Full-time study school-based or workplace-based form of study; non-stationary study)	Academic unit responsible for the study programme
Military education	Military leadership for the Senior Non-commissioned Officers	EQF level 5 Full-time study school-based	EMA Department of Academic Studies

The number of NCOs admitted to the programme currently (2019/20) stands at 70, representing an

increase of approximately 17% since 2015/16 (based on data in Table 3, SER, p. 12). The vast majority of NCO students are male (with no female students admitted in 2019/20, ibid).

Up until 2019, NCO vocational education in Estonia was undertaken at the Estonian National Defence College (ENDC) NCO School (SER). After 2019 the NCO School became a branch of the EMA Department of Tactics and the in-service training courses for senior NCOs now come under the Academy's Department of Academic Studies in partnership with the EDF speciality schools (SER, P, E).

The curriculum delivered by the EMA is largely determined by the EDF (in its "General Requirements for the Education and Military Training of NCOs", SER, p.96, E). It largely 'stands alone' from the other curricular offered by the EMA and the Academy acknowledges that greater integration with the Professional Higher Education (PHE) courses (see section 2 of this report) is desirable (SER, p. 96). (The NCO 'graduates' go on to work alongside Junior Officers who have completed the Academy's PHE programme). Likewise, the national requirements determine the duration of studies (one academic year) and the amount of academic credit (60 ECVET; SER, p. 96).

The number of students admitted to the NCO programmes are determined by the EDF and are derived from the estimated need for senior NCOs in the armed forces (SER, E). The average admission number to the NCO study courses is 62.8 students (derived from data to be found in Table 3, SER, p.12) and this number has increased slightly (by about 17%) in the course of the last five years (ibid). The number of women admitted has remained at a low level (1 to 3 per year, none in the most recent academic year, ibid).

Students choose between Land Force, Air Force and Navy specialities according to their professional background and interests. The Land Force curriculum offer is further subdivided into specialities of infantry, armoured infantry, engineering, air defence, artillery, communications, logistics and military police (SER). A notable addition to the curriculum occurred in 2017 with the inclusion of an armoured infantry speciality module (Table 46, SER, p. 97).

The specialist elective modules are delivered in partnership with the EDF speciality schools and service branches (SER, S, T, P).

The EMA is planning on moving the vocational studies programme currently running in Võru to Tartu (SER, M) because of logistical and organisational challenges (SER, p. 104) and expects to complete this process by 2023 (ibid).

5.1 Planning and management of studies

- The design and development of study programme(s) take into account the expectations of students and other stakeholders, national strategies, legislation and trends in the particular area as well as labour market needs. The level and volume of RDC activities is sufficient and supports the launching of the study programme(s).
- The objectives of study programme(s), modules (including courses) and their learning outcomes are concrete and coherent. The teaching content and methods and assessment criteria and methods support students in achieving their learning outcomes and developing their key competencies. The study programmes support the development of creativity and entrepreneurship and other general competencies.
- The administration of material and financial resources that ensure the design and implementation of the study programme(s) is purposeful, systematic and sustainable. The learning environment, including materials, tools and technology support the students in achieving their learning outcomes.

Evidence and analysis

The current vocational education and training (VET) curriculum 'Military Leadership for Senior Non-commissioned Officers' was adopted in 2015 with the current version approved by the EMA Council in June 2019 (SER). In addition to core ('basic') subjects, NCO students may choose between Land Force, Air Force and Navy specialties as elective modules (SER, P).

The design and development of the NCO VET curriculum follows the national standard of vocational education and the EDF's 'General Requirements for the Education and Military Training of NCOs', which sets the objective of preparing military leaders who share a common worldview and understanding with other EMA graduates at other levels of education (SER).

The VET curriculum is divided into two parts - basic studies (30 ECVET) and elective studies (30 ECVET). The Basic studies block consists of three modules: general leadership module, military leadership module and pedagogy module.

Based on the above modules, six concrete and coherent learning outcomes are defined (SER).

The final examination is made up of the practical performance tasks set forth in the syllabi of the basic studies and elective studies (SER).

The Academy's VET curriculum differs from that of other Estonian vocational education institutions due to the need for the EMA to maintain for the main stakeholder (the EDF) the distinctive status of the NCO programme, while ensuring its comparability with EMA higher education degree programmes for officers (SER, P).

To ensure the comparability, the EMA has employed in 2020 a separate curriculum manager to oversee all Land Force curricula at the Academy, including the vocational education curriculum, with a view to ensuring the alignment and integration of curricula across all levels of education, as well as

their comprehensive development for the purposes of the labour market needs (SER, P, SC). The Panel considers this a positive development.

In the recent years (after adopting the outcome based learning and teaching approach) the curriculum has not witnessed any major changes and at the time of writing, ostensibly because it remains current and in alignment with the needs of the EDF (SER, p. 96); however, as also expressed in the SER, the curriculum needs to be more integrated with the EMA's PHE programmes, bearing in mind its need for comparability with the PHE programmes of the Academy.

The current curriculum objectives, as well as objectives of its modules and their learning outcomes are concrete and coherent as required by the 'Planning and Management of Studies' Standard (SER).

The teaching content and methods and assessment criteria and methods support students in achieving their learning outcomes and developing their key competencies (SER, T, S).

However, the aspect of supporting students' creativity and innovation (as described in the SER), and as required in the Standard, remains vaguely represented in the curriculum and programmes.

Even though the SER does not differentiate resources dedicated solely to VET, the impression of the Panel (based on interviews M, T and inspection of resources R) is that administration of material and financial resources that ensure the design and implementation of the VET study programme(s) is purposeful, systematic and sustainable and at least on the same level as PHE. The learning environment of the Academy, including materials, tools and technology, support the students in achieving their learning outcomes (S, R). However, the training environment in Võru appears not to be of the same standard as that found in Tartu. For example, students reported computer classrooms with a total of 35 desktop PCs as insufficient, particularly as it was also claimed that students did not receive laptops from the Academy (S). However, the Panel did not visit the Academy's site in Võru and we also note the EMA's plans for the transfer of training away from the site to new facilities in Tartu (SER, M).

Inevitably the relatively demanding teaching and instructing burden and workload influence the quality of training, for example, teachers do not always have sufficient time to take an individual approach to every single student if required (T). In the interviews with alumni and students, some also noted insufficient guidance from instructors during the practical exercises (A, S).

According to some students, admission tests are missing for entry to the programme which means from the outset that instructors have to make an effort in 'equalization' (bringing all students to the same academic level) of the students' skills level (S).

Indeed, as the EMA itself acknowledges (SER, SC), the Academy needs to revisit its admission procedures for the NCO VET programme. Until 2016, the Academy applied an admissions test, but more latterly the EMA works to EDF guidance and candidates are submitted for consideration by the EDF units (SER, SC). Therefore, in effect, EMA VET staff do not have any control over assessing an applicant's ability for study. This fact supports the message received during the interviews that 'equalization' during the first months of studies produces a significant extra burden for teachers and limits their time for more student-centred approaches.

However, the Academy is aware of these issues and are actively seeking solutions, perhaps in terms of structural reform (SER, T, P).

Strength

- The planned Infrastructure development in Tartu will allow the moving of NCO training from Võru which will increase integration and organisation of studies and this is very likely to improve the learning infrastructure.

Area of concern and recommendations

- The structure of teachers' workload needs to be re-assessed in order to increase the proportion of more student-centred learning and teaching, such as one-to-one tuition and training for students. For example, dividing students into study subgroups by their ability and level of skills may result in a more effective use of instructors' time.

Opportunities for further improvement

None noted.

5.2 Learning, teaching and assessment

- Students' choice of specialisation is supported. Conditions and organisation of admission ensure fair access to education and motivated student body.
- A student-centred approach is used in the studies, aiming at the students to assume responsibility for planning their studies and career and supporting the development of key competencies and achieving the learning outcomes of the study programme.
- Student assessment, including taking accreditation of prior and experiential learning into account, supports the students and corresponds to the learning outcomes. Objective and reliable assessment is ensured.
- The organisation of studies including practical work and training is based on the specificities of students and forms of study and supports the student in achieving the learning outcomes. Opportunities have been established for mobility within Estonia and internationally.
- Support services for students are in place and available for students. Individual development and progress of students are monitored and supported.
- Graduates of the study programme are competitive in terms of their knowledge and social skills both nationally and internationally.

Evidence and analysis

The SER provides evidence that there has been active work to improve teaching in the last years and increase student-centred and initiated activity - for example, through moving away from more traditional lectures to include more seminars. In the interviews students confirmed this, describing how teachers had adopted more active learning teaching styles, for example using the idea of a

'flipped classroom' (S). It appears that most of the teaching is now undertaken in active sessions rather than as more formal lectures (S).

Where students have made complaints about teachers, or some other aspect of their programme, and been found to be justified, then these have been acted upon by the management of the Academy (SER, T, S, A).

The EMA makes a notable effort to develop curricula using feedback from employers and alumni (SER, E, A). Feedback from students is collected through the EDF e-learning platform ILIAS and analysed by VET teaching staff and other stakeholders (SER).

As to be expected, the NCO course is open only to active service members from Estonian military units. For admission to the Academy, the EMA does not conduct an entry test for applicants, however in the selection process the potential student's performance, personal characteristics and service requirements are considered.

APEL procedures are in place for the VET programme, and this is particularly important given the extensive experience of many potential students (SER, SC).

Students receive a salary whilst undertaking the programme because their studies constitute part of their service duties. However, NCO students are not free to choose their speciality according simply to their personal preferences but have to follow home unit needs which are determined before commencement of studies (SER, SC).

Specialty elective modules are delivered by EDF service branches and specialty schools (SER).

Since the NCO students are also active service members of the EDF, it appears relatively easy for them to adapt to the culture of the Academy (S).

We found that the teaching styles adopted, the learning environment as well as the overall 'atmosphere' of the Academy supports NCO students in their studies (T, S). The Panel also found that students feel that the feedback they give genuinely influences the teaching at the EMA (S).

The practical placement supports the learning outcomes and it both encourages and permits the stakeholders to participate in planning and conducting studies. Our interviews state found the NCO students are content with their programmes, often citing the benefits of a practical setting (S). Most of the students appear to be undertaking the practical aspects of the programme in the same EDF unit in which they serve (S). However, some students perceived a lack of guidance and felt they were just a pair of "extra hands" in the field. The teachers are aware of the problem and some guidance has been given to the units (SER, S, T, E, P).

The stakeholders and the alumni saw it as impressive and meaningful that the leadership exercises conducted related to all the courses of the EMA (A, S). Hence it is possible to train to all the needed levels (e.g., from squad leader to company commander) (A, S).

The recently introduced mentoring system (SER) was met with high expectations amongst the students (S). From interviews with students and alumni they commented that the system itself definitely would support their studies but sometimes they had encountered difficulties with the system, such as being unable to reach a mentor during the initial period of study (A, S).

During interviews with alumni, claims were made that the VET programme outcomes and the preparation for the next position in their unit (the next assignment) didn't fully support them professionally, and this centred on unit management issues (A). Some students also felt that whilst theoretical lessons on leadership and pedagogy have value they needed to be embedded more firmly within training processes (ibid). These views are in contrast with the Academy's own view, which is that 'students are mostly satisfied with their studies' (SER, p.104). However, the Panel did not receive the views of the NCO instructors on this issue and hence felt unable to reach firm conclusions.

The final assessment of students relies on self-reflection skills and utilizes a 'portfolio' methodology (T). Based on the documentation supplied to the Panel (including the SER) we conclude the course director carries the main responsibility for assessing the students' performance and achievements. There are no final evaluation interviews with students.

Strengths

- Appropriate previous training or current work experience can be used for APEL, reducing unnecessary repetition of learning by students.
- Students' feedback regarding teaching is taken seriously by the teaching staff, who have made efforts to improve student-centred activity in class. Students generally confirmed that their input on possible improvements in teaching were addressed.
- The practical placement supports the learning outcomes and this allows the stakeholders to participate actively in the learning process and the professional development of NCOs.

Area of concern and recommendations

- Even though the introduction of the mentoring system has received positive feedback from both students and teachers, the current effectiveness of the system (from a student needs perspective) should be assessed and developed further if necessary.

Opportunity for further improvement

- The EMA could consider widening access and admission possibilities from outside the EDF whilst keeping the same general level of entry requirements for applicants.

5.3 Development, cooperation and internationalisation of teaching staff

- Teaching is conducted by a sufficient number of professionally competent members of the teaching staff who support the development of the students.
- Teaching staff follows the principles of academic ethics and the codes of conduct in case of non-compliance.
- Members of the teaching staff participate in international mobility programs which encourage the development of their teaching and RDC activities and the cultural openness of the HEI and the Estonian society.
- The development of the teaching staff depends on the needs of the study programmes and students as well as on the feedback from all parties and self-evaluation. The effectiveness of studies and RDC activities, students' feedback, the effectiveness of supervision, development of teaching and supervision skills, international mobility and entrepreneurial or work experience in the specific field outside the HEI is taken into consideration in evaluating the work of the member of the staff.

Evidence and analysis

The VET teaching staff of the Academy have a key role in creating a high-quality learning experience and facilitating the acquisition of knowledge, competencies, and skills of NCOs. The Panel found that teaching on the EMA NCO program is conducted by a sufficient number of professionally competent members of the teaching staff who actively and successfully support the development of the students (SER, T, S). This is reflected in the atmosphere of the Academy and the lived experience of the students (SER, S, T, P).

Students and alumni emphasise the professionalism and integrity of their instructors (A, S). Employers also appreciate the pedagogical competence of VET 'graduates' as well as their teamwork skills and the academic approach they are able to adopt (SER). Employers, however, wish the Academy to place more emphasis on the development of peace-time administrative skills (ibid).

The EMA partners with the EDF specialty schools for the delivery of the VET courses although, since 2017 the Academy has also begun international cooperation with its Baltic counterparts and intends to extend this to other countries (SER). The Panel supports this initiative, not least because it increases the interoperability of NCO officers with allied military forces.

The NCO curriculum tends to 'stand apart' from the other curricula offered by the Academy (such as the PHE programmes) (SER). In part this might reflect the fact that NCO training currently physically takes place away from the other programmes at the Academy, outside of Tartu (SER). As noted earlier, this is likely to change from 2023 onwards.

According to the SER, some NCO alumni have perceived a need for the Academy to improve the content of the VET curriculum. Suggestions are that improvement is needed in the development of the competencies of company sergeant majors (ibid).

Online learning and supporting materials for NCO training appear to the Panel to be somewhat limited, developed mainly for basic skills purposes rather than for anything more advanced (R).

The Academy instructors are drawn in the main from the EDF and their rotation at the EMA lasts from three to five years (SER). The practical training in place (at the Võru site, unvisited by the Panel) is supported by just eight instructors for the entire course (a total of 70 students) (SER). However, teaching staff from Tartu support teaching sessions on subjects such as military history, legal aspects (including conduct and discipline), self-expression, and leadership.

Military teachers' pedagogical skills are considered by some students as being lower than those of civilian staff (S). There may be some justification in this view, given that it takes time to develop didactic skills and that there is a mandatory 25% rotation of military staff every year (SER). However, there is a clear improvement evident from 2013 onwards, following the previous institutional review recommendation to establish a new post for developing didactic skills (SER, T). It is also the case that the military teachers are teaching across both VET and PHE programmes at the Academy, so they can mix the teaching methods and use a linear approach to the teaching. Students find that system effective for helping them achieve course learning objectives (S, T, P).

Teaching staff of the EMA follow the principles of academic ethics as set down by the Academy and the codes of conduct in cases of non-compliance by students (SER, T, S). At the same time it should be emphasized that during the interviews with teaching staff when ethics was discussed, the civilian teaching staff often took this as reference to academic ethics whereas the military staff mainly referred to military ethics and values (SER, T).

In order to increase the extent of international cooperation on the VET programme the EMA's external relations specialist has been tasked with assembling comparative data on the NCO education and training systems in other countries (SER).

According to the EMA'S description of the programme (SER), the NCO instructors are drawn mainly from the period of August to December when they are focusing and conducting infantry basic training and practical exercises for students. It is encouraging to note that the instructors participate in different types of exercises and attend EDF annual joint level exercises.

Strengths

- The EMA has highly qualified and professional active military personnel/leaders available to contribute to NCO programmes, largely as a result of the mandatory rotation system of EDF that is currently in place (a rotation every three to five years). Further, the Academy is developing its international links to complement the resources already at its disposal.
- The teaching staff/instructors have recent relevant experience from international operations and missions abroad.

Areas of concern and recommendations

None noted.

Opportunity for further improvement

- The teaching on the NCO programme could be better coordinated with the practical and professional skills developed within parallel PHE programmes at the Academy. For example, teaching for the NCO and PHE programmes could be combined for the same topic areas even if the teaching objectives do not exactly coincide (e.g., for military subjects). This may be easier to facilitate after the move to Tartu scheduled for 2023.

Appendix: Schedule of the visit to the Estonian Military Academy

Institutional Accreditation
Estonian Military Academy

SCHEDULE OF THE VISIT
10 – 12 November 2020

Members of the expert Panel:

Robin Bryant (Chairperson)	Professor of Criminal Justice & Policing, Canterbury Christ Church University (United Kingdom)
Malena Britz	Pro Vice-Chancellor and Head of Research, Swedish Defence University (Sweden)
Brigita Mass	Student, Tallinn University of Technology (TAlTech); TalTech Student Parliament member (Estonia)
Petteri Rokka	Colonel G.S, Planning Manager, Finnish War Veterans Federation; Mentor, Finnish National Defence University (Finland)
Aivar Salekešin	Colonel, Mission of Estonia to the UN, Military Adviser, (Estonia)
Lauri Tabur	Public Sector Reform Expert, The Estonian Center of Eastern Partnership (Estonia)
Toomas Lents	Major, Personnel Department Staff Officer, Air Force Headquarters (Estonia)

Coordinators:

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Observer: Ms Jekaterina Masenko (EKKA)

Interpreters: **Ms Piret Usin; Ms Kaija Viitpoom**

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2020			
Time	**Activity**	**Experts/ room**	**Representatives of the Estonian Military Academy**
10.00 – 10.20	Introductory meeting	All panel members V200	BGEN Enno Mõts (Commandant), COL Riivo Valge (Deputy Commandant), Mrs Nele Rand (Head of Academic Studies Department), Mrs Vaike Reisner (Specialist of Level Education, Planning Section of the Department of the Academic Studies)

<table>
<tr><td>10.20 – 11.45</td><td>Meeting with the Commandant/Rector

and Deputy Commandant + administration</td><td>All

V200</td><td colspan="3"><table>
<tr><th>Name</th><th>Position</th><th>Time in active service (EDF)</th><th>Time in EMA</th><th>Current position since</th></tr>
<tr><td>1. BGEN Enno Mõts</td><td>Commandant</td><td>24y 4m</td><td>11y 4m</td><td>19.06.2017</td></tr>
<tr><td>2. COL Riivo Valge</td><td>Deputy Commandant</td><td>22y 4m</td><td>1y 3m</td><td>21.07.2019</td></tr>
<tr><td>3. Mrs Svetlana Ganina</td><td>Head of Didactics Development</td><td>-</td><td>13y 9m</td><td>01.01.2016</td></tr>
<tr><td>4. Ms Kerli Randmäe</td><td>Quality Assurance Specialist</td><td>-</td><td>1y 3m</td><td>28.10.2019</td></tr>
<tr><td>5. PVT Mari-Liis Päären</td><td>p</td><td>1m</td><td>1y 3m</td><td>21.09.2020</td></tr>
</table></td></tr>
<tr><td>11.45 – 11.55</td><td>Panel reflection</td><td></td><td colspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td>11.55 – 12.15</td><td>Break</td><td></td><td colspan="3"></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">12.15 – 13.30

Parallel interviews</td><td>Meeting with students – Military Leadership in the Land Force (PHE; MA)</td><td>Malena Britz, Petteri Rokka

V200</td><td colspan="3">1. SSGT Timo Hunt, PHE, 1. year
2. SGT Markus Rosin, PHE, 2. year (Head of the Cadet Corps, Member of the Governing Council)
3. SGT Alo Ollisaar, PHE, 3. year
4. 2 LT Rainer Järvela, MA, 1. year
5. 1 LT Pauliine Nettan, MA, 2. Year
6. Cadet Vytene Dagyte, guest student, General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania</td></tr>
<tr><td>Meeting with students – Military Leadership for Senior Non-commissioned Officers (VET programme)</td><td>Lauri Tabur, Aivar Salekešin</td><td colspan="3">1. SGT Erki Ott, student (Member of the Governing Council)
2. SGT Rimo Mändla, student
3. SGT Karl-Steven Vijar, student
4. SGT Liis Hulkko, student
5. SGT Roman Bondarevski, student
6. SSGT Siim Nõgisto, alumni 2020</td></tr>
</table>

		Brigita Mass V409	7. SSGT **Agor Aasa**, alumni 2020 8. SSGT **Henri Raska**, alumni 2020
	Meeting with students – Military Leadership in the Navy (PHE) and Military Leadership in the Airforce (PHE)	Robin Bryant, Toomas Lents V404	1. SGT **Sten-Mark Alberg**, navy 1. year 2. PO 1st class **Mikk Savisto**, navy, 2. year 3. SSGT **Rain Praks**, navy, 3. year (Cadet Sergeant)) 4. SSGT **Allan Kaarli Murumets**, air force 1. year 5. SGT **Johanna Kasak**, air force, 3. year
13.30 – 14.30	*Lunch break*		
14.30 – 15.45 *Parallel interviews*	Meeting with **alumni - Military Leadership in the Land Forces (PHE; MA), VET programme**	Malena Britz, Petteri Rokka, Lauri Tabur, Aivar Salekešin V200	1. SSGT **Joonas-Dein Plakso**, VET programme, 2020 2nd Infantry Brigade, Kuperjanov Infantry Battalion, Mortar Battery, Platoon Commander 2. 2 LT **Tõnis Kask**, PHE, land force, 2019 2nd Infantry Brigade, Kuperjanov Infantry Battalion, Mortar Battery, Platoon Commander 3. 2 LT **Mari-Liis Länik**, PHE, land force, 2020 1st Infantry Brigade, Engineer Battalion, Engineer Company, Platoon Commander 4. **Martin Jõesaar**, MA, 2019 (ZOOM) Centre for Defence Investment, Infrastructure Department, Senior Project Manager 5. MAJ **Mario Lementa**, MA, 2020 1st Infantry Brigade, Scoutsbattalion, Combat Support Company, Upper-Battalion Distant Fire Officer

	Meeting with **alumni - Military Leadership in the Navy and Airforce (PHE)**	Robin Bryant, Brigita Mass, Toomas Lents V404	1. 2 LT **Grigori Gavrilov**, navy, 2019 (ZOOM) Naval fleet, Minesweeper Ugandi, Operational Section, Navigation Officer 2. 2 LT **Kevin Must**, navy, 2018 (ZOOM) Naval fleet, Minesweeper Ugandi, Weapon Section, Weapon Officer 3. 2 LT **Urmo Urbus**, navy, 2018 Naval fleet, Operational Staff, Naval Operational Center, Operational Group, Junior Staff Officer 4. 2 LT **Mikk Golubtsov**, air force, 2018 (participated in alumni shadowing) Air force, Air Surveillance Division, Air Surveillance Engineering Group, Radar Post Laiuse, Commander 5. 2 LT **Viljo Vainikko**, air force, 2017 Air force, Air Surveillance Division, Air Operations Control Centre, Weapon System Control Cell, Senior Targeting Officer
15.45 – 16.30	**Tour of the facilities**	Lauri Tabur, Aivar Salekešin, Brigita Mass, Toomas Lents	*Including Library, presentation of SIS, e-learning platform, plagiarism detecting software etc.* SGM **Andri Harkmann** – tour in the building ~30 min **Kadri Pullisaar** – SIS ~5 min **Marika Oper** – ILIAS ~5 min **Birgit Kerb** – URKUND ~5 min

<table>
<tr><th colspan="4">WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2020</th></tr>
<tr><th>Time</th><th>Activity</th><th>Experts/ room</th><th>Representatives of the Estonian Military Academy</th></tr>
<tr><td>10.00 – 11.15</td><td>Meeting with employers and external stakeholders of EMA, incl Advisory Board

All programmes</td><td>All panel members

V200</td><td>1. MG Indrek Sirel, Deputy Commander of the EDF, Member of the EMA’s Advisory Board
2. LTC Eero Aija, 1st Infantry Brigade, Scoutsbattalion, Commander
3. LTC Mark Trubok, Air force, Commander of the Airbase
4. LCDR Martin Aeltermann, Naval fleet, Minesweeper Ugandi, Commander
5. 1 LT Mardo Liiv, Air force, Airbase, Base Protection Operations Center
6. 2 LT Siim Vahkel, 2nd Infantry Brigade, Kuperjanov Infantry Battalion, 2nd Infantry Company, Commander's Assistance</td></tr>
<tr><td>11.15 – 11.25</td><td>Panel reflection</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>11.25 – 11.45</td><td>Break</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>11.45 – 13.00

Parallel interviews</td><td>Meeting with the teaching staff - Military Leadership in the Land Forces (PHE; MA), VET programme</td><td>Malena Britz, Petteri Rokka, Lauri Tabur,</td><td>
<table>
<tr><th>Name</th><th>Position</th><th>Time in active service (EDF)</th><th>Time in EMA</th><th>Current position since</th></tr>
<tr><td>1. Mrs Ülle Säälik</td><td>Lecturer</td><td>-</td><td>1y 8m</td><td>04.02.2019</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Chair of Leadership and Pedagogy; curricula: PHE (land force, navy, air force), MA</td></tr>
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		Aivar Salekešin V200	2. LTC **Mart Sirel**	Lecturer	23y 11m	2y 4m	01.01.2019
			Chair of Tactics; curricula: PHE (land force), MA				
			3. MAJ **Janek Kesselmann**	Lecturer	19y 5m	1y 1m	01.10.2019
			Chair of Tactics; curricula: PHE (land force, air force), MA				
			4. CPT **Virgo Vutt**	Teacher	8y 2m	2y 3m	01.05.2019
			Chair of Tactics; curricula: VET programme, PHE (land force, navy, air force)				
			5. CPT **Kadri Rodima**	Teacher	17y 4m	3y 4m	01.04.2020
			Chair of Tactics; curriculum: VET programme				
			6. Mrs **Annika Timpka**	Teacher	-	11y 10m	01.01.2009
			Chair of Foreign Languages; curricula: PHE (Land force, Navy, Air force)				
			7. MAJ **Riho Juurik**	Visiting Lecturer since 2017			
			VET programme, PHE (Land force)				
			8. Mr **Illimar Ploom**	Associate Professor	-	3y 2m	01.09.2017
			Chair of Strategy and Innovation; curricula: PHE (land force, navy, air force), MA				
	Meeting with the **teaching staff - Military Leadership in the Navy and Airforce (PHE)**	Robin Bryant, Brigita Mass, Toomas Lents V404	**Name**	**Position**	**Time in active service (EDF)**	**Time in EMA**	**Current position since**
			1. Mr **Kaarel Piip**	Lecturer	-	4y 3m	07.10.2019
			Chair of Strategy and Innovation; curricula: PHE (land force, navy, air force), MA				
			2. Mrs **Anni Jürine**	Lecturer	-	1y 8m	20.02.2019
			Chair of Leadership and Pedagogy; curricula: VET programme, PHE (land force, navy, air force), MA				
			3. Mrs **Aigi Piirimees**	Lecturer	-	15y 2m	01.07.2018
			Chair of Foreign Languages; curricula: PHE (land force, navy, air force), MA				
			4. MAJ **Marko Pungar**	Lecturer	18y 2m	3y 3m	01.08.2017

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<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Chair of Tactics; curricula: VET programme, PHE (land force, navy, air force)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">5. LTC Kristo Lipasaar (ZOOM)</td><td>Visiting Lecturer since 2019</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">PHE (air force)</td></tr>
</table>
</td></tr>
<tr><td>13.00 – 14.00</td><td>Lunch</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>14.00 – 15.30</td><td>Meeting with study programme managers and developers, incl chairs of academic departments</td><td>All panel members

V200</td><td>
<table>
<tr><th>Name</th><th>Position</th><th>Time in active service (EDF)</th><th>Time in EMA</th><th>Current position since</th></tr>
<tr><td>1. LTC Riho Tammistu</td><td>Lecturer</td><td>27y 9m</td><td>3m</td><td>01.08.2020</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Leader of Curricula “Military leadership for the land force (MA)“, “Military leadership for the land force (PHE)” and “Military Leadership for Senior Non-commissioned Officers (VET)“</td></tr>
<tr><td>2. LCDR Taavi Urb</td><td>Lecturer</td><td>21y 1m</td><td>9y 8m</td><td>01.05.2019</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Leader of the Curriculum “Military leadership for the navy (PHE)”</td></tr>
<tr><td>3. MAJ Reet Stamm</td><td>Lecturer</td><td>16y 11m</td><td>3m</td><td>01.08.2020</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Leader of the Curriculum “Military leadership for the air force (PHE)”</td></tr>
<tr><td>4. COL Risto Lumi</td><td>Lecturer</td><td>32y 11m</td><td>7y 6m</td><td>01.08.2018</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Commander of the Chair of Strategy and Innovation</td></tr>
<tr><td>5. LTC Tarmo Kundla</td><td>Lecturer</td><td>24y 2m</td><td>1y 3m</td><td>01.08.2019</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Commander of the Chair of Tactics</td></tr>
<tr><td>6. Mr Martin Mooses</td><td></td><td>-</td><td>2m</td><td>03.08.2020</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Head of the Chair of Leadership and Pedagogy</td></tr>
<tr><td>7. Mr Aarne Ermus</td><td>Lecturer</td><td>-</td><td>13y 2m</td><td>15.07.2013</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Chair of Leadership and Pedagogy; Developer of the Curriculum “Military leadership for the land force (MA)“</td></tr>
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			8. Mrs **Nele Rand** | | - | 17y 8m | 20.06.2016 Head of the Academic Studies Department
15.30 – 15.40	*Panel reflection*		
15.40 – 16.00	*Break*		
16.00 – 17.15	**Department of support services and student corps**	All panel members V200	**Name** | **Time in active service (EDF)** | **Time in EMA** | **Current position since** 1. LTC **Kalle Köhler** | 20y | 9y 1m | 14.08.2019 Department of Support Services, Commander 2. CPT **Siret Paabut** | 24y 6m | 19y 4m | 01.08.2015 Department of Support Services, Administrative Section, Commander (human resources) 3. SFC **Ragnar Pandis** | 10y 4m | 2y 4m | 01.11.2019 Department of Support Services, Support Section, Communications and Information System Group, Commander 4. CPT **Urmas Abel** | 25y 7m | 8y 11m | 01.12.2019 Department of Support Services, Study Support Section, Commander (learning materials) 5. Mr **Enar Oidermaa** | | 9m | 20.01.2020 Department of Support Services, Financial Advisor 6. SGM **Raido Rõivas** | 26y | 18y 7m | 01.05.2019 Department of Support Services, Sergeant Major (infrastructure) 7. Mrs **Ülle Laidna** | - | 19y 2m | 03.09.2001 Department of Support Services, Study Support Section, Library, Leading Bibliographer 8. MAJ **Viljar Niinepuu** | 16y 2m | 9y 1m | 01.05.2019

			Student Corps, Commander (students' every day service, students' support, extracurricular activities)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2020

Time	Activity	Experts/ room	Representatives of EMA
10.00 – 11.15	**Applied Research**	All panel members V200	

Name	Time in active service (EDF)	Time in EMA	Current position since
1. LTC **Raul Järviste**	19y 8m	3y 3m	01.08.2018
Department of Applied Research, Commander			
2. Mr **Rihhard Nadel**	-	4y 2m	01.09.2016
Department of Applied Research, Operations Analysis Group, Military Operations Analyst			
3. Mr **Vladimir Sazonov**	-	6y 4m	02.05.2019
Department of Applied Research, Resource Management Group, Senior Researcher			
4. Mr **Jaan Murumets**	-	17y 5m	01.06.2018
Department of Applied Research, Head of the Resource Management Group			
5. CPT **Kersti Vennik**	19y 9m	19y 9m	01.08.2010
Department of Academic Studies, Chair of Strategy and Innovation, Lecturer			
6. Mr **Ivar Männamaa**	-	1y	03.10.2019
Department of Academic Studies, Chair of Leadership and Pedagogy, Researcher			
7. Mr **Markus Otsus**	-	9m	27.01.2020

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>Department of Applied Research, Project Manager of the Project "Unmanned Systems on the Battlefield"</td></tr>
<tr><td>11.15 – 11.40</td><td>Break</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>11.40 – 12.40</td><td>Department of Academic studies, Centre for Continuing Education</td><td>All panel members

V200</td><td>
<table>
<tr><th>Name</th><th>Time in active service (EDF)</th><th>Time in EMA</th><th>Current position since</th></tr>
<tr><td>1. LTC Ahti Varblane</td><td>22y 2 m</td><td>18y 11m</td><td>25.08.2008</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Centre of War and Disaster Medicine, Commander</td></tr>
<tr><td>2. LTC Arno Kruusmann</td><td>23y 1m</td><td>11y 4m</td><td>01.08.2020</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Department of Academic Studies, Planning Section, Commander</td></tr>
<tr><td>3. Mrs Maia Boltovsky</td><td>-</td><td>16y 2m</td><td>04.01.2017</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Department of Academic Studies, Head of the Chair of Foreign Languages, Lecturer</td></tr>
<tr><td>4. Mrs Maris Luhamets</td><td>-</td><td>12y 9m</td><td>01.05.2019</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Department of Academic Studies, Planning Section, PHE and MA Students’ Advisor (incl. APEL)</td></tr>
<tr><td>5. Mrs Birgit Kerb</td><td>-</td><td>2y 3m</td><td>13.04.2020</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Department of Academic Studies, Planning Section, Specialist of Foreign Affairs</td></tr>
<tr><td>6. MSGT Tanel Otsus</td><td>22y 9m</td><td>20y 2m</td><td>25.04.2017</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Department of Academic Studies, Planning Section, Non-commissioned Officer of Planning (Admission)</td></tr>
<tr><td>7. Mrs Vaike Reisner</td><td>-</td><td>1 a</td><td>04.11.2019</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Department of Academic Studies, Planning Section, Specialist of Degree Studies</td></tr>
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<tr><td>12.40 – 13.40</td><td>Lunch break</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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13.40 – 14.45	✓ ***Inquiry of documents*** ✓ ***"open doors"*** – *opportunity for those from EMA who want to come to discuss various topics related to institutional accreditation with the experts* ✓ ***ad hoc interviews***	All panel members V200	Meeting via Skype with teachers from Navy speciality school: LCDR **Deniss Tulin** – visiting Lecturer since 2019 LCDR **Janno Lauri** LT **Indrek Paju**
14.45 – 15.45	*Panel meeting: preparation for the preliminary conclusions*		
15.45 – 16.15	Open meeting to staff and students: **presentation of preliminary conclusions by the panel**	All panel members V200	