



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
ΑΔΙΠ

ΑΡΧΗ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ
ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΣΤΗΝ ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ

HELLENIC REPUBLIC

HQA

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE
AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY

Accreditation Report for the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS)

Institution Name: Hellenic Army Academy (HAA)
Date: 7 December 2019

ΑΡΙΣΤΕΙΔΟΥ 1 & ΕΥΡΙΠΙΔΟΥ, 105 59 ΑΘΗΝΑ
Τηλ.: +30 210 9220944, FAX: +30 210 9220143
Ηλ. Ταχ.: adipsecretariat@hqa.gr Ιστότοπος: <http://www.hqa.gr>

1, ARISTIDOU ST., 105 59 ATHENS, GREECE
Tel.: +30 210 9220944, Fax: +30 210 9220143
Email: adipsecretariat@hqa.gr Website: www.hqa.gr



**Επιχειρησιακό Πρόγραμμα
Ανάπτυξη Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού,
Εκπαίδευση και Διά Βίου Μάθηση**
Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ελλάδας και της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης



Report of the Panel appointed by the HQA to undertake the review of the
Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) of the
Hellenic Army Academy
for the purposes of granting accreditation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Part A: Background and Context of the Review.....	4
The Accreditation Panel	4
Review Procedure and Documentation	5
Institution Profile	6
Part B: Compliance with the Principles	8
Principle 1: Institution Policy for Quality Assurance	8
Principle 2: Provision and Management of the Necessary Resources	10
Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance	15
Principle 4: Structure, Organization and Operation of the IQAS	18
Principle 5: Self-Assessment	21
Principle 6: Collection of Quality Data: Measuring, Analysis and Improvement	23
Principle 7: Public Information	26
Principle 8: External Evaluation and Accreditation of the IQAS	28
Part C: Conclusions	30
Features of Good Practices	30
Areas of Weakness	30
Recommendations for Follow-up Actions	31
Summary & Overall Assessment	32

PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

The Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS) of the Higher Education Institution named: **Hellenic Army Academy (HAA)** comprised the following four (4) members, drawn from the HQA Register, in accordance with the Law 4009/2011:

1. Prof. Nicolas Tsapatsoulis (Chair)
Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus
2. Dr. Fivos Andritsos
European Commission, JRC, Italy
3. Prof. Loukas N. Kalisperis
Pennsylvania State University, USA
4. Assoc. Prof. Ioannis Michaelides
Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus

Review Procedure and Documentation

The Accreditation Panel members (AP) reviewed the material submitted by the Hellenic Army Academy (HAA) in advance of its arrival and briefing. Accreditation Panel members attended a meeting in the HQA premises in Athens on Monday 02/12/2019, at which staff members of the HQA explained the Accreditation Procedure, and the role and tasks of the AP members. The AP members met privately afterwards to discuss their initial impressions from the documents provided by the Department and to organize their review approach and processes.

The site visit to the Hellenic Army Academy, HAA hereafter, at Vari, Attica took place on Tuesday 03/12/2019, from 09:30 to 18:00, and Wednesday 04/12/2019, from 09:00 to 18:15.

At the welcome meeting, the AP met the Commander of the Academy, Maj. General Dr. D. Choupis, the Second in Command, Brig. A. Alexiadis, Head of the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU), the Dean of the School, Prof. N. Daras, the Director of Military Education, Brig. A. Polichronos, the QAU Staff Officer, Mjr. Gkimpatsis, and the QAU Academic Admin, Ass. Prof. N. Karadimas.

During this meeting the AP members had a broad overview of the history and current situation of HAA and they were informed about the Quality Assurance Procedures of HAA. They laid emphasis on communicating the mandate of the visit, the objective being on identifying the procedures and processes in place that will enable the IQAS implementation monitoring.

Dr. Choupis indicated that the quality assurance philosophy is well-adopted by the HAA staff and students and there is a long-lasting tradition of quality assurance procedures mainly implemented as standing orders issued by the Hellenic Army General Staff (HAGS).

On the 03/12/2019 the AP had, also, meetings with:

1. the *members of the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)* and discussed, extensively, with them the degree of compliance of the Internal Quality Assurance System to the Standards for Quality Accreditation,
2. *faculty members and Internal Evaluation Groups (IEGs/OMEA)*, to investigate the degree at which the internal evaluation processes were adopted and applied, both at the department level but also at the various operation units and among the faculty. A generic discussion also took place about the relationship of OMEAs with the QAU and the means of collaboration, adequacy of resources and possible areas of weakness.

Between the two previously mentioned meetings, the AP had a guided tour at some of the infrastructures of HAA, including amphitheaters, teaching rooms and laboratories, the library, the center of research and informatics, and sporting-exercise places and facilities such as the fully equipped 50m covered swimming pool.

On 04/12/2019 the AP had meetings with:

3. *Academy Cadets (undergraduate students)*, to (a) assess students' satisfaction from their study experience and campus facilities, (b) identify students participation and engagement in the quality assurance system, and (c) explore and prioritize issues concerning student life and welfare,
4. *Postgraduate students*, to record their views on the learning process, progression and assessment and to explore their input and overall involvement in the quality assurance system. Priority issues concerning grants, mobility, research and career opportunities were also discussed,

5. *The chief administration officers and administrative staff*, to determine their attitude towards the IQAS and to discuss with them the impact of official Institutional documents, such as the strategic plan and the Quality Manual, in the development and smooth operation of the Institution.
6. *Graduates/ alumni*, to discuss their experience of studying at the Institution and their career path after their graduation. Ways through which they can contribute feedback to the assessment of the Study Programs they attended were also discussed,
7. *External stakeholders*, to discuss the relations of the Institution with external stakeholders, mainly from the private sector, to investigate their relations with HAA and the positive impact that those relations reflect on the local communities in particular and the Greek community in general.

A final meeting with the QAU took place on 04/12/2019, 16:00 - 17:30. During this meeting the AP discussed with the QAU points which needed further clarification, such as the funds that are available to the academic staff to promote their research.

Subsequently, the AP informed the Commander, the Second in Command and Head of QAU, the Dean, the Director of Military Education, and the QAU Staff Officers, orally, about the key findings from their previous meetings and their study of the documents they were provided for the accreditation.

Overall, the onsite visit was very informative for the AP to form a broad view regarding the IQAS of HAA. The AP formulated an excellent impression from the community of HAA and the external stakeholders. All of them were kind and expressed honest willingness to provide any information the AP requested. The AP was very positively surprised by the maturity of the students and the freedom and comfort of expressing different opinions of the staff, academic and military.

The visit schedule, however, was tight and the AP in most cases skipped the coffee breaks or limited their duration so as to keep up with it. Still, some late meetings had to be delayed and the AP would like to officially apologize to the corresponding parties.

In closing, the Accreditation Panel members would like to express their gratitude to the faculty, administration, cadets and staff of the Hellenic Army Academy for their excellent and memorable hospitality and support during the visit.

Institution Profile

The Hellenic Army Academy (HAA), was the personal vision of the first Governor of Greece, Ioannis Kapodistrias, who is also its founder. In June 1828, he announced its establishment and was the one that called the first five students "Evelpides". HAA the oldest Higher Education Institute of Greece. It is placed in Vari Attiki since 1982 and it covers a total area of 4000 acres (1000 acres of buildings and 3000 acres for military training purposes).

The main mission of the Hellenic Army Academy (HAA) is to provide the Hellenic Army with leaders versed in the military science through living in a military environment and undergoing the many-sided military and academic education. The Cadets' entrance to the Academy is made possible after they have successfully passed the Pan-Hellenic University Entrance Exams with very high-grade placement. The Hellenic Army Academy was referred to as a "university-level" education and training institution for the first time in the law in 2003. The Academy is organized

in a single department with five divisions: Military History, Humanities, Mathematics and Engineering, Physical Sciences, and Physical and Cultural Education.

The Undergraduate Educational Program lasts four years. Each academic year is divided in two semesters. The Winter Semester starts in September and ends in February, while the Spring Semester starts in March and ends in August. Each semester includes both Military and Academic Education, theoretical as well as practical. Each Academic Year consists of 39 weeks, 26 of which are of academic nature and 13 are of military. Four of these weeks are devoted to the Final Written Exams, while for 8 weeks Cadets are on a leave. The Academy provides Cadets with broad academic education which both complements and broadens Military education and training. The Undergraduate Educational Program includes courses from a broad field of sciences, ranging from Humanities and Social Studies to Applied Sciences, from Chemistry to History, and from Psychology to Engineering. Additionally, HAA offers 2 Post Graduate programs (approved by N. 5351/2014 ΦΕΚ 163Α) in cooperation with the *Polytechnic of Crete*, offering courses and certificates to both cadets and civilian students. Currently the approval of additional post Graduate programs is pending, and the academic and military staff of HAA are exploring the opportunity of expanding educational programs to include doctoral level education. A year-long HAA program offers preparatory education for international students that intend to enter all military academies in Greece, including students from a diverse group of countries.

Military education starts in the first year when each Cadet undergoes Basic Military Education and is trained in individual tactics. The Cadet's training continues in the following years till he/she becomes well-versed in how to command a team and a platoon; he/she also learns the basic elements of organization and function of an Infantry Company. Military Education and Training takes place either in the area of Vari or in other places around Greece. The Cadets Corps has been organized to form a Regiment (862 cadets) consisting of two Battalions. Additionally, HAA educates Cadets from ten different countries (Cyprus, Albania, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Georgia, Montenegro, Moldova, Tunisia, Senegal and Jordan) in total 146 Cadets. This multi-nationality in the composition of Cadets confers upon the Academy the title of an ambassador of our morality and traditions beyond the borders of Greece. All Cadets, regardless of their nationality and sex, attend the same intensive and demanding program of Academic and Military Education.

Through its military education programs, as well as its extensive Erasmus+ educational exchange agreements, the Academy has built a strong network of cooperation with other academic and military institutes in Greece, Europe and worldwide. Despite its small size, HAA is ranked among the best military academies in the world.

Additionally, the Academy's activities show collaboration agreements with local Authorities and Athletic Associations and clubs. A wide number of events characterizes HAA such as international and national conferences and workshops, meeting in collaboration with Professional Associations, athletic and voluntary events.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

Principle 1: Institution Policy for Quality Assurance

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AND ADJUSTED ACCORDING TO THE INSTITUTIONS' AREAS OF ACTIVITY. IT SHOULD ALSO BE MADE PUBLIC AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL PARTIES INVOLVED.

The quality assurance policy is the guiding document which sets the operating principles of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), the principles for the continuous improvement of the Institution, as well as the Institution's obligation for public accountability. It supports the development of quality culture, according to which, all internal stakeholders assume responsibility for quality and engage in quality assurance. This policy has a formal status and is publicly available.

The policy for quality is implemented through:

- *the commitment for compliance with the laws and regulations that govern the Institution;*
- *the establishment, review, redesign and redefinition of quality assurance objectives, that are fully in line with the institutional strategy.*

This policy mainly supports:

- *the organisation of the internal quality assurance system;*
- *the Institution's leadership, departments and other organisational units, individual staff members and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance;*
- *the integrity of academic principles and ethics, guarding against discriminations, and encouragement of external stakeholders to be involved in quality assurance;*
- *the continuous improvement of learning and teaching, research and innovation;*
- *the quality assurance of the programmes and their alignment with the relevant HQA Standards;*
- *the effective organisation of services and the development and maintenance of infrastructure;*
- *the allocation and effective management of the necessary resources for the operation of the Institution;*
- *the development and rational allocation of human resources.*

The way in which this policy is designed, approved, implemented, monitored and revised constitutes one of the processes of the internal quality assurance system.

Institution compliance

HAA, being an integral part of the Hellenic Army has had, since a long time, well established, documented procedures as part of the military operational procedures and practices. Moreover, HAA has put in place a fully electronic, anonymous, internal evaluation system which permits its cadets to evaluate all individual courses of the academic curriculum as well as a good part of the military ones.

HAA has also implemented fully the HQA recommendations regarding IQAS. All HAA functional units including cadets, academic, military and administrative staff, are adequately represented in QAU through the OMAEs. HAA fully complies with the QA spirit and the operating principles as per the ADIP guidelines, which is embedded in the Institution's DNA.

It should be noted however that this is not reflected adequately in the HAA Strategic Planning nor in the documents provided to the AP through HQA. The AP understands that this is due, to a large extent, to the HQA forms and procedures that do not match well with the particular nature of the military academies.

Panel judgement

Principle 1: Institution policy for Quality Assurance	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- R1.1 The excellent policy of the Institution regarding QA should be better reported both internally and externally, possibly integrating the HQA and the military procedures. In that way, the HAA excellence would be put in evidence and some best practices could be propagated to other academies or higher education establishments.
- R1.2 QA should be more visible and distinct in the HAA strategic plan.

Principle 2: Provision and Management of the Necessary Resources

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ENSURE APPROPRIATE FUNDING FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING ACTIVITIES, RESEARCH, AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN GENERAL. RELEVANT REGULATIONS SHOULD BE IN PLACE TO ASSURE THAT ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR TEACHING AND RESEARCH ARE AVAILABLE AND READILY ACCESSIBLE (E.G. CLASSROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRAIRIES, IT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROVISION OF FREE MEALS, DORMITORIES, CAREER GUIDANCE AND SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES, ETC.).

Funding

The Institution ensures adequate funding to cover not only the overhead and operational costs (regular budget and public investment budget) but also costs related to research, innovation and development (Special Account for Research Funds, Property Development and Management Company). The financial planning and the operation of an effective financial management system constitute necessary tools for the full exploitation of the resources.

Infrastructure

Based on the requirements and needs arising during its operation, the Institution has determined ways to define, allocate and maintain all the necessary resources to ensure its smooth and proper functioning, i.e. teaching, research and auxiliary facilities, equipment and software, support facilities (cleaning, transportation, communication) etc. The scope of the IQAS should include a suitable managing and monitoring system to safeguard the infrastructure. Compliance to the internal regulations is also necessary.

Working environment

The Institution ensures -as far as possible- that the working environment has a positive effect on the performance of all members of the academic community (students and staff). Factors that are taken into consideration towards the creation of such a favorable environment are, among others, the sanitary facilities, the lighting/heating/ventilation system, the cleanliness and the overall appearance of the premises, etc. The scope of the IQAS should include an appropriate managing and monitoring system to promote a favorable working environment and to ensure compliance with the existing provisions.

Human resources

The Institution and the academic units are responsible for the human resources development.

The subject areas, as well as the competences and tasks of the staff members are defined by the corresponding job descriptions that are established within the operation scope of each academic or administrative unit. These posts are filled following the requirements set by the law, on the basis of transparent, fair and published processes. The continuous training and evaluation of the staff is considered necessary for the enhancement of the performance, which is recorded and monitored as provided in the context of the IQAS.

The Institution should acknowledge and provide the necessary resources for the implementation of the IQAS, its enhancement and the provision of services that assist the satisfaction of the quality assurance requirements. Moreover, the Institution (Quality Assurance Unit-QAU) should properly organise the administrative structure and staffing of the IQAS, with a clear allocation of competences and tasks to its staff members.

Institution compliance

Funding

The financial management system of the Hellenic Army Academy (HAA) constitutes the necessary tool for realizing its vision and strategic planning supported by a well-functioning Internal QA System. The institution is committed to safeguard funding, to cover indispensable costs for needed infrastructure and an appropriate working environment for students and staff.

Main source of funding is the appropriation from the regular government budget which is controlled centrally by the Hellenic Army General Staff (HAGS). The Academy does not have direct control of the expenditures as authority of the purchasing process resides with Hellenic Army General Staff (HAGS) in the Ministry of National Defense, thus creating a substantial bureaucracy with possible implications on the implementation of the academic and research functions of HAA. Unfortunately, research funding is not available for the Academy from the reserves of the Special Research Account (ELKE). ELKE is administratively placed and under the control of the Hellenic Army General Staff (HAGS) in the Ministry of National Defense and does not efficiently support the Academy's research and development projects. It is worth noting that the procedure for research proposal approval by HAGS is cumbersome and time-consuming. The current process discourages the academic staff for exploring research funding opportunities and partnerships with other academic and research institutions with dire implications for the establishment of viable research laboratories and a research culture within the Academy. It should be noted that the establishment of an individual ELKE for each of the Hellenic Military Academies had been requested already from the evaluation panels in 2015 but nothing has been done since.

In general, the dependency on centrally controlled processes and procedure at HAGS for research approval and expenditures does not contribute to a flexible and efficient operation of the institution's other academic duties or by supporting actions consistent with HAA's Strategic Development Plan. The HAA has established viable rules and procedures for reviewing requests and data from all units and makes recommendations for allocation of resources within the limitations prescribed by HAGS.

Infrastructure

The campus of the HAA extends in a very large and exquisitely beautiful area of the Attica municipality of Vari. The institution and the users report that the existing infrastructure is more than sufficient to meet current needs as well as to provide the necessary technological and other services for smooth functioning, such as: appropriate office facilities for the staff, very well appointed spaces for teaching and other related activities, equipment and software, appropriate spaces for lodging and dining, athletic & recreational facilities and communication services, etc. The HAA continuously monitors, sometimes through outsourced contracts, the infrastructure and facilities, the library and laboratory equipment, athletic recreational and dormitory facilities, catering for the needs of maintenance, safekeeping and cleanliness. Similar established routines apply for the ICT infrastructure and the Library, which are well-kept and upgraded. One of the stated goals of HAA is the gradual upgrading of the laboratory equipment, which some of them needing a substantial upgrade. HAA should consider the upgrade of their physical infrastructure, facilities and equipment to better provide for the research needs.

It is evident that HAA manages to maintain a clean and very attractive physical environment that is praiseworthy. Of note is the substantial infrastructure upgrades that HAA has undertaken through majors grants and donations by private individuals and foundations. The Academy and personnel, past and present, should be congratulated for their continued efforts in the stewardship of their physical environment.

The AP observed that HAA has developed a QA culture with clear assignments of responsibilities and tasks, systematically supported and monitored by the institution's QAU, despite the limitations of the structure and the available staff. The available structures and associated personnel of QAU are publicized in the Greek version of the HAA website.

Working environment

HAA ensures that the work environment has a positive impact on the performance of all members of the academic community. The institution emphasizes transparency in processes that deal with fair and equitable treatment and provides a social psychological environment that is conducive to high quality academic work. HAA cares for functional hygienic premises, lighting, heating, ventilation, cleanliness and availability of spaces for all. The unique environment and discipline that a military academy requires of its members has a very positive effect on the physical and psychological well-being of its constituency. In addition, HAA is oriented towards adopting good practices to transform to a "Green" Academy, fostering an attitude of sustainability in their activities.

From the conversations with staff, cadets, students, alumni, and stakeholders, the AP can confirm that HAA is an environment characterized by proximity, familiarity and respectful relationships for all, enabling a culture of "quality".

Human resources

The responsibilities and duties of all staff (teachers, researchers and administrators, both permanent and contracted) are defined by the Organization and the Internal Regulations (ΦΕΚ/Government ΠΡΟΕΔΡΙΚΟ ΔΙΑΤΑΓΜΑ ΥΠ' ΑΡΙΘΜ. 50) as applicable, in accordance with the legislation and specified by each academic or administrative unit. The Leadership of the HAA employs a transparent human resource management policy based on meritocratic and ethical values. It also recognizes the importance of continuing development of its human resources for the qualitative enhancement of teaching, research and relations with the surrounding community. The HAA continuously evaluates the performances and developmental needs of the staff, encouraging and offering a variety of opportunities for everyone to grow in his/her professional role. The continuous training and evaluation of the staff is safeguarded through the quality assurance process and standing orders of HAGS, but the opportunities for the academic staff to expand their research opportunities are not clearly defined.

HAA is distinguished for its small size but succeeds to afford a very satisfactory ratio of, approximately, eight students per faculty member. The low cadet rate to academic faculty at HAA is beneficial to both the cadets and faculty members and allows for a very personal and productive work environment. However, the AP is concerned that the number of faculty is substantially reduced from the prescribed levels which could adversely affect this ratio in the future. Additionally, the AP is concerned with the excessive time and bureaucracy that is required to post and fill an academic vacancy.

The teaching staff and cadets of the HAA have an adequate international experience. An adequate percentage of cadets have participated in Erasmus+ and other international programs. Academic staff members have carried out postgraduate studies abroad, some participate in academic networks and international scientific conferences. Notable are the limitations placed upon academic staff based on the lack of research funding and support by the centralized management (HAGS) of resources which in turn limits opportunities for furthering of their continued growth as scholars. HAA should provide more opportunities for academic staff to present their work and participate in credible international conferences.

Finally, AP believes the distinction between DEP and laboratory or special teaching staff, is a threat to the continuing success of the academy particularly with the inability, of the institution, to offer positions to qualified candidates and valuable employees. In addition, the lower academic salaries of the HAA academic staff from the standard salaries of the other Greek academic institutions creates an undesirable inequality.

Panel judgement

Principle 2: Provision & Management of the Necessary Resources	
2.1 Funding	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
2.2 Infrastructure	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
2.3 Working Environment	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
2.4 Human Resources	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Principle 2: Provision & Management of the Necessary Resources (overall)	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- R2.1 The currently enacted regulations that requires HAA to follow HAGS central processes for financial administration of research grants and contracts, substantially threatens the quality of the research, discourages innovation, and should be reconsidered. ELKE should be placed within the academic institution and be administered by the HAA Research Committee and its Chair.
- R2.2 HAA should have direct control of the expenditures and authority of its purchasing process.
- R2.3 It is strongly recommended that HAA prioritizes the update and/or replacement of the existing outdated laboratories.
- R2.4 It is strongly recommended that HAA adapts its infrastructure to better cover the research needs of the Academy.

- R2.5 HAA should strive to increase the number of academic staff and complete the current process of hiring new faculty members.
- R2.6 Efforts should be made to normalize the salaries of the HAA academic staff to that of the overall academic community of Greek Higher Educational Establishments (AEI).
- R2.7 HAA should provide more opportunities for its academic staff to expand their scholarly and research activities also in order to accommodate their advancement (promotion).

Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE CLEAR AND EXPLICIT GOALS REGARDING THE ASSURANCE AND CONTINUOUS UPGRADE OF THE QUALITY OF THE OFFERED PROGRAMMES, THE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ACTIVITIES, AS WELL AS THE SCIENTIFIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES. THESE GOALS MAY BE QUALITATIVE OR QUANTITATIVE AND REFLECT THE INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY.

The Institution's strategy on quality assurance should be translated into time-specific, qualitative and quantitative goals which are regularly monitored, measured and reviewed in the context of the IQAS operation, and following an appropriate procedure.

Examples of quality goals:

- *rise of the average annual graduation rate of the Institution's Undergraduate Programmes to x%;*
- *upgrade of the learning environment through the introduction of digital applications on;*
- *improvement of the ratio of scientific publications to teaching staff members to;*
- *rise of the total research funding to y%*

The goals are accompanied by a specific action plan for their achievement, and entail the participation of all stakeholders.

Institution compliance

The IQAS includes a Strategic Plan for 2019-2023 which consists of high level goals that refer to the quality of teaching, adequacy of infrastructure, internationalization of studies and advancement of personnel. Goals referring to research are totally missing while some goals are in fact specific actions that need to be undertaken to achieve the high level goals, such as for instance the goals (η) and (ι):

«η. Την εκμετάλλευση από την Σχολή των τελετών ορκωμοσίας αλλά και λοιπών τελετών, σεμιναρίων, ημερίδων, ομιλιών κ.α. προκειμένου να προβαίνει σε προσκλήσεις αντιπροσώπων από Στρατιωτικές Ακαδημίες και Ανώτατα Εκπαιδευτικά Ιδρύματα του εξωτερικού. Επιπλέον, την οργάνωση τελετών – επισκέψεων, κατόπιν έγκρισης της Ιεραρχίας, διακεκριμένων προσωπικοτήτων, αντιπροσωπειών, διπλωματικών αρχών για την ανάδειξη της Ιστορίας και του υψηλού επίπεδου εκπαίδευσης της Σχολής.

ι. Στο πλαίσιο των ποικίλων αθλητικών δράσεων, η πρόσκληση Αξκών και μαθητών από στρατιωτικές ακαδημίες του εξωτερικού για την συμμετοχή τους σε αθλητικές διοργανώσεις (Μαραθώνιος, Λεωνίδα Τρόπαιο κλπ).»

While the high level goals related to the quality of teaching are accompanied by specific action plans for their achievement and are paired with specific indicators, this is not the case for all goals mentioned in the Strategic Plan (i.e. goals referring to internationalization of studies, improvement of infrastructure, etc.). Overall, there is a discrepancy between the goals defined in the Strategic Plan (document A7) and the associated action plan (document A6).

The Quality Manual, based on the ADIP template, is quite generic and not adapted to the particular nature of HAA. The goals defined in the HAA Strategic Plan are not reflected in the action plan. Although, benchmarking with similar institutions across the country is facilitated

when adopting the generic quality goals and KPIs suggested by HQA, ownership of the IQAS by key players in the Institution, such as the faculty and the students, is lost.

There is specific provision in the Quality Manual for the establishment and implementation of quality goals. Explicit procedures referring to the setup of quality goals related to: (a) learning process and learning outcomes, (b) research activities and innovation, (c) infrastructure and management systems, and (d) human development, are detailed therein. However, the majority of outputs defined in this process do not reflect to the actual Strategic Plan and the associated action plan. For instance, goals and KPIs related to research performance of HAA are provisioned in the outputs of Quality Process #3 (page 34, point 7) but are totally missing in the Strategic Plan. The same also holds for goals and KPIs related to external funding.

Panel judgement

Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance	
3.1 Study Programmes/ education activities	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
3.2 Research & Innovation	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	X
Non-compliant	
3.3 Administration (funding, human resources, infrastructure management)	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
3.4 Resources (funding, human resources, infrastructure)	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance (overall)	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- R3.1 Given that scientific research is one of the two basic missions of HAA, according to the founding law and the corresponding regulations, high level goals referring to research should be included in the Strategic Plan.
- R3.2 All goals mentioned in the Strategic Plan should be accompanied by specific action plans and paired with KPIs (Key Performance Indicators)
- R3.3 The outputs defined in the Quality Process #3 should be reflected in the Strategic Plan and the associated action plan.

Principle 4: Structure, Organization and Operation of the IQAS

INSTITUTIONS SET UP AND ESTABLISH AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM, WHICH INCLUDES PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES COVERING ALL AREAS OF ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES AND FUNCTIONS. SPECIAL FOCUS IS GIVEN ON THE QUALITY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING, INCLUDING THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT, RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND GOVERNANCE.

The key goal of the internal quality assurance system (IQAS) is the development, effective operation and continuous improvement of the whole range of the Institution's activities, and particularly, of teaching, research, innovation, governance and relevant services, according to the international practices - especially those of the European Higher Education Area - and the HQA principles and guidelines described in these Standards.

Structure and organization

In each Institution, the Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) holds the responsibility for the administration and management of the IQAS. The QAU is set up according to the existing legislative framework and is responsible for:

- *the development of specialized policy, strategy and relevant processes towards the continuous improvement of the quality of the Institution's work and provisions;*
- *the organization, operation and continuous improvement of the Institution's internal quality assurance system;*
- *the coordination and support of the evaluation process of the Institution's academic units and other services, and;*
- *the support of the external evaluation and accreditation process of the Institution's programs and internal quality assurance system in the context of the HQA principles and guidelines.*

The Institution's IQAS and its implementation processes are determined by the decisions of the competent bodies, as provided by the law, and are published in the Government Gazette, as well as on the Institution's website. The above are reviewed every six years, at the latest.

To achieve the above goals, the QAU collaborates with HQA, develops and maintains a management information system to store the evaluation data, which are periodically submitted to HQA, according to the latter's instructions. The QAU is responsible for the systematic monitoring of the evaluation process and for the publication of evaluation-related procedures and their results on the Institution's website.

The QAU structure has been approved by the Institution's competent bodies, as provided by the law, while all competences and tasks accruing from this structure are clearly defined.

Operation

The Institution takes action for the design, establishment, implementation, audit and maintenance of the Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS), taking into account the Standards' requirements, while making any necessary amendments to ensure fitness to achieve its aims.

The above actions include:

- *provision of all necessary processes and procedures for the successful operation of the IQAS, as well as implementation of the above processes and procedures on all of the Institution's parties involved ;the Institution's areas of activity can constitute the IQAS processes, e.g. teaching, research and innovation, governance, services etc. An IQAS process is an area of activity including data input, data processing and outputs. A procedure defines the way an action is implemented and includes a course of stages or steps, e.g. the curriculum design procedure;*
- *determination of how the IQAS procedures / processes are audited, measured and assessed, and how they interact;*
- *provision of all necessary resources to enable the IQAS function.*

Documentation

The IQAS documentation includes, among other things, a series of key documents demonstrating its structure and organization, such as the Quality Manual, which describes how the Standards' requirements are met.

The Annexes of the Quality Manual include:

- *the Quality Policy and the Quality Assurance Objectives;*
- *the necessary written Procedures, along with the entailed forms;*
- *the necessary Guides, External Documents (e.g. pertinent legislation), as well as any other supporting data;*
- *the standing organizational structure of the QAU, with a detailed description of the competences, the required qualifications and the goals for each post. The organizational chart is structured in a manner that ensures that the IQAS organizational requirements are fully and properly met.*

Institution compliance

HAA, as well as the other two Hellenic military academies, are subject to a legislative framework different than the rest of the Higher Educational Establishments (AEI). Most importantly, they are not autonomous but, on the contrary, are integral parts of the Hellenic armed forces, the General Staff of which is ultimately responsible for all matters concerning HAA, including financial and academic ones.

Inevitably, this creates some difficulties also regarding the functions of IQAS which must match the HQA guidelines within the per-existing military rules and procedures. Although there appear to be no essential mismatches between the two systems, the different “cultures” and styles impose a substantial effort in reaching congruent documents and plans.

The most important problems that arise from HAA lack of autonomy, concerning the QA system, in particular regarding the research, innovation and governance, are:

- The implementation of many measures or/and actions depends on HAGS rather than the HAA own governing bodies.
- Approval procedures of even simple, elementary items is bureaucratic and time consuming, often requiring tens of signatures, sometimes even at ministerial level.
- Research activities within HAA are practically nonexistent, despite the claimed willingness to perform research; HAA academic staff, who must perform research in order to get promoted, are obliged to affiliate to other higher education establishments.
- HAA academics (DEP) and laboratory or special teaching staff are subject to different legal framework than their AEI counterparts, generally resulting in lower retributions.
- HAA has limited control even for its own website, which is hosted in the platform of the Hellenic armed forces portal.

The OMEAs are structured according to functional units instead of departments / divisions, which is judged as positive. Even if not all the OMEAs are represented in QAU, there appears to be a good collaboration and no problems were identified by AP. However, QAU does not have its own offices / premises or any dedicated employees. Because of all the pre-existing military QA system and the problems cited above, it appears that the OMAEs / QAU activities have been driven / focused almost exclusively from the HQA evaluation / accreditation requirements, which were met primarily thanks to the ad-hoc effort of some academic and military staff.

HAA's website provides an adequate description, in Greek, of QAU and the Institution's QA goals and procedures. This is not the case for the English version. HAA has developed and maintained a management information system based on the Moodle open source platform that supports adequately the operation of IQAS.

HAA has developed a quality manual according to the HQA instructions. It failed however to map the particular characteristics of the organization, namely those resulting from the lack of autonomy in financial and other matters.

Panel judgement

Principle 4: Structure, Organization and Operation of the IQAS	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- R4.1 At short term, the QA procedures, indices and manuals should reflect the particular nature of HAA which appears to be not an autonomous AEL but, on the contrary, is an integral part of the Hellenic Armed Forces. HQA driven procedures should be integrated with the military QA procedures providing a unique, simple and streamlined set of QA rules and procedures, which could deviate from the "standard" HQA procedures.
- R4.2 At a longer perspective, the Greek State should re-examine the legal status of HAA, possibly providing for some autonomy, streamlining it with the bulk of the Greek higher education establishments.
- R4.3 The QAU should be staffed by dedicated professional(s) and have its own office.

Principle 5: Self-Assessment

THE INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM COMPRISES PROCEDURES PROVIDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THE INSTITUTION'S ACADEMIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS, ADDRESSING AREAS OF OVERSIGHTS OR SHORTCOMINGS, AND DEFINING REMEDIAL ACTIONS TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SET GOALS, AND EVENTUAL IMPROVEMENT.

The QAU conducts, on an annual basis, a self-assessment of the IQAS, following the written procedure provided for each area of activity, which is implemented by a certain academic or administrative unit, as appropriate. The procedure determines the timing, the participants, the data under consideration, and the expected outcomes. The self-assessment aims at a final estimation of the suitability of the IQAS in force, as well as at basing decisions concerning the necessary remedial or precautionary actions for improvement.

The data considered in the context of the self-assessment of a programme may, for example, include:

- *students performance;*
- *feedback from students / teaching staff;*
- *assessment of learning outcomes;*
- *graduation rates;*
- *feedback from the evaluation of the facilities / learning environment;*
- *report of any remedial or precautionary actions undertaken;*
- *suggestions for improvement.*

The outcomes of the self-assessment are recorded in internal reports drawn up by the QAU. The reports identify any areas of deviation or non-compliance with the Standards, and are communicated to the interested parties (if appropriate). The Institution's resolutions concerning any modification, compliance, or enhancement of the IQAS operation might include actions related to:

- *the upgrade of the IQAS and the pertinent processes;*
- *the upgrade of the services offered to the students;*
- *the reallocation of resources;*
- *the introduction of new quality goals, etc.*

The outcomes of the self-assessment are recorded and, along with the source data, are archived as quality files.

A special procedure is followed for the compliance check of newly launched programmes (of all three cycles), or programmes that are to be reviewed shortly, prior to the institutional approval of the programme.

Institution compliance

HAA is in full compliance with the directives of HQA and the self-assessment procedures of IQAS are based on the principles set up by HQA. The members of QAU have done a great job, in short time, to prepare all required documentation and define the procedures to perform the annual quality assessments for the academic activity of HAA in the period 2014-2018. Given that the official IQAS has not been yet accredited there is no report on the assessment of IQAS itself. Despite that, from the general self-assessment report during the period 2014-2018 there are suggested actions that relate to (a) the upgrade of the services offered to the students, (b) reallocation of resources, and, indirectly, to (c) the introduction of new quality goals.

While the self-assessment report of period 2014-2018 concludes with very specific and pertinent findings and recommendations, a procedure for transforming them into goals and action plans is missing. It is also evident that the self-assessment findings did not affect the *Strategic Plan* that was developed afterwards for the period 2019-2023.

The AP did not identify a clear provision in the IQAS on how the self-assessment outcomes are used to develop documented action plans and the way these plans are communicated to the cooperating key stakeholders (faculty, military personnel, cadets).

Panel judgement

Principle 5: Self-Assessment	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- R5.1 The analysis and presentation through spider charts of the data collected from the postgraduate programs are excellent. A similar approach should be adopted for the analysis and presentation of the data collected for the undergraduate studies (covering all aspects of education activities) and the research performance of academic personnel.
- R5.2 Annual reports on research activities of each member of the faculty (permanent or collaborating) should be collected. Those reports could be analyzed in the same way as the data collected from the postgraduate programs (see previous recommendation).
- R5.3 The Quality Process #4 should be adapted to include recommended ways of analyzing data collected from the various reports as indicated above,
- R5.4 The Quality Process #4 should be adapted to include specific ways of transforming the findings of self-assessments into strategic and/or operational goals and action plans.

Principle 6: Collection of Quality Data: Measuring, Analysis and Improvement

INSTITUTIONS ARE FULLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND USE OF INFORMATION IN AN INTEGRATED, FUNCTIONAL AND READILY ACCESSIBLE MANNER, AIMING AT THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE QUALITY DATA RELATED TO TEACHING, RESEARCH AND OTHER ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES, AS WELL AS OF THOSE RELATED TO THE ADMINISTRATION.

The QAU should establish and operate an information system to manage the data required for the implementation of the Internal Quality Assurance System.

The QAU measures and monitors the performance of the various activities of the Institution, through appropriate procedures established in the context of the IQAS structure, and assesses their level of effectiveness. The measuring and monitoring is conducted on a basis of indices and data provided by HQA in the pertinent guidelines and forms, which are part of the National Information System for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (NISQA). These measurements may concern: the size of the student body, the size of the teaching and administrative staff, the infrastructure, the structural components of the curricula, students' performance, research activity performance, financial data, feedback on student and faculty satisfaction surveys, data related to the teaching and research activity, services, infrastructure, etc.

The QAU makes use of the figures and presents the results for consideration using statistical analysis. Outcomes are displayed through histograms and charts. This sort of information is used by the Institution for decision making, at all levels, pursuing improvement, as well as for setting, monitoring, assessing and reviewing the Institution's strategic and operational goals.

Institution compliance

The QAU of HAA has established and operates an information system based on guidelines provided by HQA, to manage the data required for the implementation of the IQAS. Data collection, analysis, and use are foreseen in the IQAS through a dedicated process. The AP studied the evaluation package submitted by the HAA and, through the onsite visit, a verification of the appropriateness and actual implementation of these procedures was attempted. The QAU measures and monitors the performance of the various activities of the Institution, through appropriate procedures established in the context of the IQAS structure and assesses their level of effectiveness.

Data concerning the evaluation of teaching staff and methods as well as quality of individual courses are collected from students. The student questionnaire, which constitutes the basic data collection tool, covers questions on teaching quality and course materials and infrastructure, and focuses on the teacher's approach to the course. The evaluation questionnaires for the undergraduate students are available in electronic form. This assessment is carried out in a strictly anonymous manner, where each student randomly takes a password to login to the system, complete the questionnaire and submit it to the system. The evaluation questionnaires for the post-graduate students are in hardcopies. The results of these surveys are examined, mainly by the QAU staff, and corrective actions are accordingly suggested. As confirmed by students and alumni alike, this process has led to improvements in elements of courses that were identified. The Accreditation Panel has verified, via meetings with faculty, students and alumni, that this procedure is adequate.

The accuracy and reliability of collected data is verified by way of collection, the anonymity of participating students in the evaluation of individual courses and programs of study, as well as by the volume of data collected through the years, that allow for statistical comparisons and monitoring of the progress of certain programs, courses, or instructors.

Regarding research and innovation, the AP believes that research culture is established among the academic staff, as individuals, but this is not convincingly demonstrated for the Academy as a whole (strategic research planning).

The Internal Evaluation Report contains data presentation in graphs so as to easily demonstrate trends that allow direct interpretation and comparisons with similar institutions. There is, also, strong evidence that the Academy has taken measures to adhere to the recommendations of the external reviews for the Institution. Many of those recommendations were effectively adopted as processes and procedures of the IQAS and are stated in the Quality Manual.

Key data and associated indicators have been set out and foreseen as input to setting and reviewing the Academy's strategic and operational goals. It seems that the majority of these indicators is heavily influenced by the indicators suggested by HQA and do not necessarily transcribe to the direct needs and particularities of the Institution. Additional indicators, however, contributed by the Academy have been defined.

The data gathered allow to establish quantitative indicators to be managed by QAU. These data are potentially very useful as they provide the basis for policy decisions in curriculum and other improvements. A number of pilot checks have been carried out to ensure data reliability and avoidance of duplication or diffusion of erroneous data.

Panel judgement

Principle 6: Collection of Data: Measuring, Analysis & Improvement	
6.1 Study Programmes / education activities	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
6.2 Research & Innovation	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	X
Non-compliant	
6.3 Activities related to the administration (funding, human resources, infrastructure management)	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	
6.4 Human Resources	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Principle 6: Collection of Data: Measuring, Analysis & Improvement (overall)	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- R6.1 Additional key performance indicators reflecting the particularities of the HAA should be developed.
- R6.2 The evaluation questionnaires for the post-graduate students should be available in electronic form as it is done with the undergraduate students.
- R6.3 More effort should be put in to improve research culture in the Academy.

Principle 7: Public Information

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD PUBLISH INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR TEACHING AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES IN A DIRECT AND ACCESSIBLE MANNER. ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION SHOULD BE UP-TO-DATE, CLEAR AND OBJECTIVE.

The QAU publishes data related to IQAS structure, organization and operation. Furthermore, the QAU publishes data pertinent to the institutional quality policy and objectives, as well as information and data relevant to the Institution's internal and external evaluation. In the context of the self-assessment process, the QAU verifies that adequate information regarding the teaching activities and, particularly, the programmes' profile and the overall institutional activity is publicly available. QAU makes recommendations for improvement, where appropriate.

Institution compliance

The online presence of HAA, is not adequate, especially if compared to other higher education establishments. This is understandable, since the Academy does not have its own website but is hosted in the central portal the Hellenic Army General Staff (HAGS) in the Ministry of National Defense.

Most pertinent information regarding the HAA's educational activities is adequate and the overall presentation of the Academy is well documented on the Greek site. Information for the undergraduate and joint graduate program of study is documented and publicly available. All internal and external evaluation reports for HAA and the programs of study are easily accessible, including published information which is actualized and clear. Both the Academy's mission statement and its QA policy are available online. The structure and operation of all the units within the Academy is readily available online and it can be adequately located. The biographic presence of the HAA faculty and researchers is not well documented and their work is not well described within the online presence of the Academy, especially on the English version of the site.

The presence of the Academy information targeting international audience is limited and deficient compared to that available in Greek language. Additionally, and although the Academy is heavily engaged in public service, its presence within the larger society and educational community is not commensurate with its achievements.

Panel judgement

Principle 7: Public Information	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	X
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- R7.1 HAA must take the necessary steps to ensure that the management and maintenance of the HAA web site and its content resides within the structure of the Academy and be able to update the content locally by staff members of the Academy. As such, certain

areas currently under construction, such as Research Activities, can be kept current by Academy staff members.

- R7.2 HAA should increase its efforts to fully publish their substantial public service to the local community and their acknowledgement by the general public, as well as taking full advantage of public media, advertising and projecting their achievements and their impact to society at large.
- R7.2 HAA should publicize their programs and achievements in English, similar to that of the Greek version.

Principle 8: External Evaluation and Accreditation of the IQAS

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD BE PERIODICALLY EVALUATED BY COMMITTEES OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS SET BY HQA, FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACCREDITATION OF THEIR INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEMS (IQAS). THE PERIODICITY OF THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION IS DETERMINED BY HQA.

External quality assurance, in the case in point external evaluation aiming at accreditation, may act as a means of verification of the effectiveness of the Institution's internal quality assurance, and as a catalyst for improvement, while opening new perspectives. Additionally, it can provide information with a view to public acknowledgement of the positive course of the Institution's activities.

The Higher Education Institutions engage in periodic external quality assurance which is conducted taking into consideration any special requirements set by the legislation governing the operation of the Institutions and their academic units.

Quality assurance, in this case accreditation, is an on-going process that does not end with the external feedback, or report or its follow-up process within the Institution. Therefore, Institutions ensure that the progress made since the last external quality assurance activity is taken into consideration when preparing for the next one.

Institution compliance

The HAA has undergone an institutional evaluation in 2015. In response to the external evaluation findings and recommendations, the QAU prepared an Action Plan as to how to address the issues raised. This plan was communicated to all parties concerned, including the HAA administration for the approval of the proposed remedial actions. The Action Plan includes among others, a time schedule for the various actions ranging from immediate up to 5 years. It also provides information related to the resources required for each action.

The report mentions that the institution has addressed successfully all the recommendations for improvement. Certain issues, however, such as for example those related to research, are not fully implemented mainly due to existing procedures and constraints that prevent the exploitation of research funding opportunities and actions, such as partnerships with other academic institutions and research centers. The AP on its site visit and upon studying all the written documentation has concluded that the institution is fully aware of the need and ready for continuous efforts at improvement. Staff members as well as teaching and research personnel appreciate the importance of the external review of the IQAS as well as its contribution to the improvement of the institutional services provided.

Panel judgement

Principle 8: External Evaluation & Accreditation of the IQAS	
Fully compliant	X
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

- R8.1 The Academy should strengthen its efforts towards simplifying the existing procedures related to the exploitation and implementation of research activities.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

Features of Good Practices

The AP acknowledges that a considerable amount of work has been carried out in the HAA for the design and implementation of an effective and efficient IQAS. The members and staff of the QAU are dedicated and actively engaged towards this goal and the AP should credit them and encourage them to continue the hard work they do.

HAA has well-established, documented procedures as part of the military operational procedures and practices. It has also fully implemented the HQA recommendations regarding IQAS. The cadets and the academic and military staff are willing to participate in the QA processes. The AP was positively impressed by the fact that, contrary to what one might expect at a military school, cadets were able to freely express also critical views.

Although all academic and military staff are motivated and of high quality, the most important asset of HAA are its cadets. For a variety of reasons, HAA has been in the very fortunate situation of having cadets of excellent intellectual quality, motivation and devotion. HAA has built on these cadets and has produced, to date, excellent officers, fact supported by numerous distinctions in highly competitive international exercises.

It must be noted that HAA and the HAGS, despite the severe financial crisis, have found the means, through the military ERASMUS and other cadet exchange programs, to send a good proportion of the cadets for visits, training or competitions in prestigious military institutions abroad.

The AP needs also to point out that the HAA campus is clean and very well-maintained and that the academic staff, despite the conditions not favorable for their career development, make everything possible to give the best instruction to the cadets.

Areas of Weakness

Unfortunately, the above-quoted strengths of the HAA, including its strong QA system, are not reflected adequately in the HAA *Strategic Planning* nor in the documents handed to the AP through HQA. Some actions and procedures are ad-hoc and are not recorded in the IQAS but are part of military standing orders. Understandably, this is partly due to the superposition of the HQA imposed IQAS on top of the existing military procedures and practices.

The most important weakness of HAA has to do with the fulfillment of its institutional role for undertaking research. According to the HAA mission statement encoded in the Greek law, research and postgraduate courses in matters of military science is one of the three HAA missions. However, research is absent from the HAA *Strategic Planning*, as per the text handed to the AP. In fact, research activities are practically absent in HAA. This has a series of very important implications that affect negatively the cadets, the HAA itself, the Hellenic Army and the country as a whole:

1. The cadets cannot profit and get the best out of the school in what regards the military technologies that are increasingly important in modern warfare.

2. The school cannot get access to important military research funds. The availability of such funds, including on asymmetric and hybrid warfare, are likely to increase substantially over the next decade.
3. HAA will not be able to attract and retain bright academic staff who, in the absence of in-house research (including doctoral programs) necessary for their career advancement, would either leave HAA or direct their main professional interests elsewhere.
4. In addition, the country loses important opportunities and does not fully exploit the very expensive weaponry that is obliged to acquire with important sacrifice of the Greek people.

The fact that HAA is an integral part of the Hellenic Army and, consequently, has to follow the HAGS centralized financial processes, including for research grants and contracts, is a serious obstacle for performing research and discourages innovation.

Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

Given the lack of autonomy of HAA, the recommendations below should be considered within the context of HAGS (Hellenic Army General Staff) and the Defense Ministry:

1. The excellent policy of the Institution regarding QA should be better reported both internally and externally. In that way, the HAA excellence would be put in evidence and some best practices could be propagated to other academies or higher education establishments. QA should be more visible and distinct in the HAA strategic plan. HQA driven procedures should be integrated with the military QA procedures providing a unique, simple and streamlined set of QA rules and procedures. QAU should be staffed by dedicated professional(s) and have its own office. Additional reporting, questionnaires, and key performance indicators reflecting the particularities of the HAA should be developed, as it has been outlined in the individual *Principles* sections of this report.
2. HAA should be able to administrate research and innovation activities (research grants, contracts, etc.) in-house, by-passing the cumbersome centralized HAGS procedures. ELKE should be placed within the academic institution and be administered by a HAA Research Committee and its Chair. HAA should have direct control of the expenditures and authority of its purchasing process and make concrete efforts towards simplifying the existing procedures related to the exploitation and implementation of research activities.
3. It is strongly recommended that HAA prioritizes the modernization and/or replacement of the existing laboratories in order to facilitate flexibility in teaching and learning methodologies, as well as the research needs of the Academy.
4. HAA should normalize the salaries the HAA academic staff to that of the overall academic community of the Greek AEI. HAA should strive to increase its academic staff, complete the ongoing process of hiring new faculty members and provide them more opportunities for expanding their scholarly and research activities also in order to accommodate their advancement (promotion).
5. Given that Research is one of the three missions of HAA, it should become one of the main activities at HAA and, as such, high-level research goals should be included in the *Strategic Plan*, accompanied by specific action plans and paired with appropriate KPIs.

6. Research culture in the Academy should be improved, as well as the establishment of doctoral programs. Possible venue for such expansion could be the idea of a '*National Defense University*', as mentioned during the visit.
7. HAA should increase its efforts to effectively disseminate their substantial academic, military and public service to the community by taking full advantage of their website public media, advertising and projecting their achievements and their impact to society at large. HAA should publicize their programs and achievements in English, similar to that of the Greek version.

Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are:

1. Principle 1: Institution Policy for Quality Assurance
2. Principle 2: Provision and Management of the Necessary Resources
3. Principle 6: Collection of Quality Data: Measuring, Analysis and Improvement
4. Principle 8: External Evaluation and Accreditation of the IQAS

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are:

1. Principle 3: Establishing Goals for Quality Assurance
2. Principle 4: Structure, Organization and Operation of the IQAS
3. Principle 5: Self-Assessment
4. Principle 7: Public Information

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are:

N/A

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are:

N/A

The members of the Accreditation Panel for the IQAS of the Hellenic Army Academy

Name and Surname

Signature

1. Prof. Nicolas Tsapatsoulis (Chair), Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus
2. Dr Fivos Andritsos, European Commission, Joint Research Center, Ispra, Italy
3. Prof. Loukas Kalisperis, Pennsylvania State University, Pennsylvania, USA
4. Assoc. Prof. Ioannis Michaelides, Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus